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Schmidt visit points to Africa dilemma

Süddeutsche Zeitung

Western policy towards Africa suffers from a twofold handicap: double standards in the clash between black and white and military inferiority in the East-West conflict.

These drawbacks apply to the West in general. Bonn's policies, highlighted by Chancellor Schmidt's visit to Lagos and Lusaka, are no exception.

On the racial issue the West lacks credibility because, although it opposes apartheid and favours black majority rule, it refuses to resort to the two sanctions that might accelerate matters: military muscle and an economic boycott.

In the struggle against growing Soviet influence on the black continent the West lacks a mercenary force that packs as much punch and is as beyond suspicion as Moscow's Caribbean Legion — the Cubans.

Even if it had such a foreign legion its use would meet domestic resistance in most Western countries. So the West prefers to export its own solution to the world's ills: political stabilisation by means of social and economic reforms.

The Soviet Union, in contrast, can act much faster, stabilising amenable regimes from a gun-barrel. In the short term the barrel will almost invariably beat the dollar too.

In the long term Western policy towards Africa is banking on the greater economic power of the industrialised countries and on the Russians swiftly growing unpopular wherever they appear because they are so keen to gain power.

Egypt and Somalia are seen as examples, countries in which Soviet objectives have reached for the sky and failed.

This theory has lately shed some of its appeal. It could prove to have been no more than dangerous wishful thinking. Where the Soviet Union has not only advisers of its own, but also Cuban and East German mercenaries firmly stationed it is not so easily dislodged.

The pro-Soviet coup in South Yemen ought to be a clear warning, especially to President Neto of Angola, who is making eyes at the West again but last year barely survived a coup evidently backed by the Soviet Union.

Where the Soviet Union has firm bases it is also in a good position to back attempted coups in neighbouring countries.

Anxiety over this was why France and the United States reacted so promptly to the invasion of Zaire's Shaba province. This fear is also behind the speculation about a Cuban advance on Namibia organised by Soviet generals.

This speculation may be premature, but only because Moscow is still weighing the risks and unlikely to risk a clash between its mercenaries and the powerful South African forces.

It is by no means entirely unfounded, especially when stripped of its more fantastic trappings: a conceivable attempt to lure the West into a trap by means of clashes with the Cubans.

The idea is disarmingly simple. Engi-

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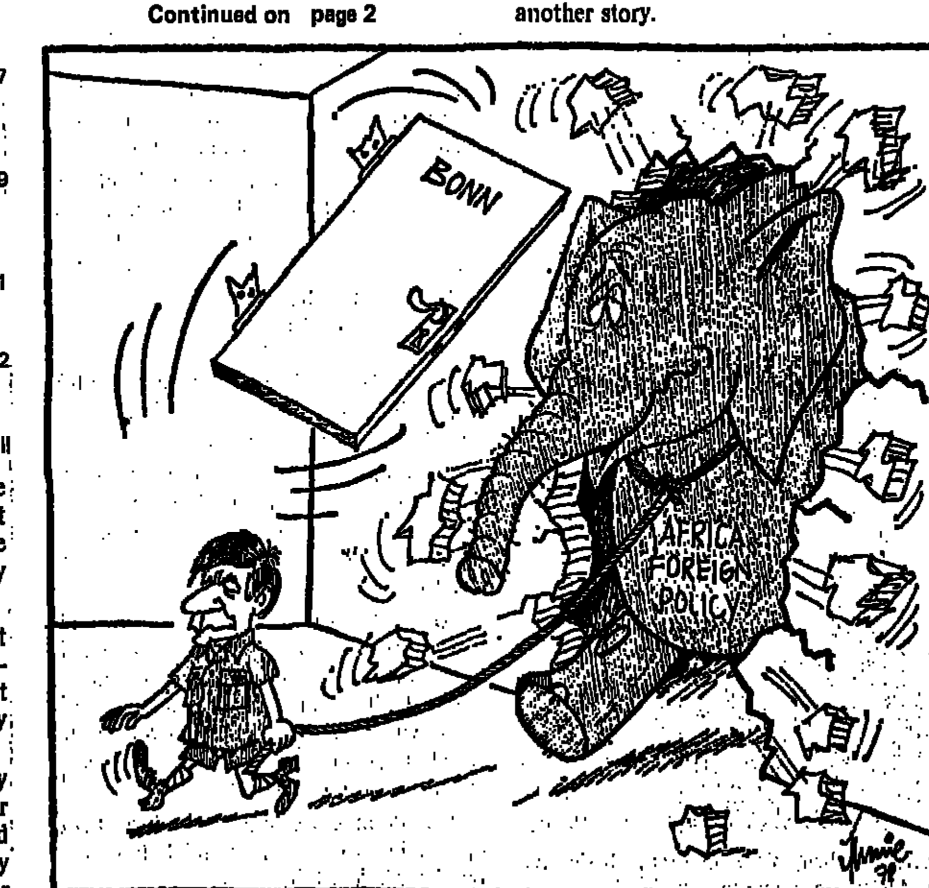


Israeli Prime Minister Begin meets Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher on his arrival in Jerusalem for talks. (Photo: dpa)

Genscher bid to sooth hurt Israeli feelings

Free Democratic Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher is having to repair the damage caused in Israel by Social Democratic Chancellor Helmut Schmidt.

When Herr Genscher's trip to Jerusalem was originally arranged no great problems beset bilateral ties. Now it is another story.



(Cartoon: Felix Mussil/Frankfurter Rundschau)

Israeli politicians are irked by comments Chancellor Schmidt made during Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Fahd's visit to Bonn about the Palestinians' right to a state of their own.

The Chancellor also saw fit to level vociferous criticism at Israel's outlook on Middle East affairs.

Foreign Minister Genscher now has the task of interpreting the Chancellor's words where no interpretation is necessary.

Herr Schmidt has committed the Bonn government to a new approach, going even further than President Carter, who is the only Western politician who can fairly claim the right to a say in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Yet Mr Carter, unlike Herr Schmidt, has so far taken care not commit himself to a Palestinian state.

Jerusalem is now calling on Herr Genscher to explain what induced the Chancellor to go it alone rather than take cover behind more or less non-committal EEC resolutions.

The Foreign Minister's position is made even more embarrassing by the Franco-Federal Republic contract to supply Syria with anti-tank missiles!

In these circumstances Herr Genscher cannot hope to fulfil his secret wish to become an honest broker between Israelis and Arabs. Israeli confidence in Bonn has been needlessly forfeited.

Chancellor Schmidt has laid an unnecessary stumbling block in his Foreign Minister's path, postponing what could have proved a welcome contribution by Bonn towards peace in the Middle East.

Erwin E. Hirschmann
(Lübecker Nachrichten, 29 June 1978)

■ FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Soviet manoeuvres on Berlin call for firm West stand

Süddeutsche Zeitung

Soviet policymakers have again levelled serious accusations at the United States while sounding a gentler note in dealings with Bonn.

In Minsk, Mr Brezhnev, referring to his May visit to the Rhine, stressed that ties between Moscow and Bonn were a major factor in the stability and relaxation of tension in Europe.

This acknowledgement of an important fact does not preclude another policy pursued with extraordinary perseverance by Moscow yet anything but conducive to the relaxation of tension.

In contravention of Berlin's four-power status, Moscow seems determined to fully integrate East Berlin as the GDR capital while trying to cut ties between West Berlin and West Germany, indeed Western Europe.

The consistent method is to ignore crucial parts of the four-power agreement on Berlin.

True, the 1971 agreement includes vague references liable to varying interpretation by East and West, but before differing the two sides must make sure that certain provisions of the agreement are simply ignored.

This was the purpose of the commitment to "strict observation and full implementation" of the four-power agreement as endorsed by Mr Brezhnev.

Before insisting that East Berlin exists neither in law nor in fact, the eastern part of the divided city having been the GDR capital since 1949, Soviet ambassador Pyotr Abrassimov would do well to recall that the four-power agreement deals with Berlin as a whole and not merely West Berlin.

Otherwise there would not be a Section I with provisions regarding the Western sectors of Berlin.

Two further claims the Soviet ambassador in East Berlin never tires of making are also without foundation no matter how often he repeats them.

His first is that direct or indirect inclusion of West Berlin in the elections to the European Parliament runs counter to the four-power agreement.

His second is that the periodic chairmanship of the Bundesrat, or Upper House, in Bonn by Mayor Stobbe of West Berlin is illegal.

To assess these claims we must refer to the sections of the agreement which Moscow persistently overlooks. Take for instance the ties between West Berlin and the Federal Republic, which are to be "maintained and developed."

Or take the reminder that Berlin is not an intrinsic part of the Federal Republic or the use of the words "maintained" and "continued."

Mayor Stobbe is no less entitled than his predecessors to periodically chair the Bundesrat.

In so doing he does not even underscore some kind of federal government presence in West Berlin. He is merely continuing a practice regarded by the Western Allies as a prerequisite of the four-power agreement.

West Berlin's ties with the European Community cannot be separated from its ties with Bonn, these having steadily developed since the Treaty of Rome in 1957.

In view of the special status of the divided city West Berlin members of the European Parliament are to be nominated in the same way as the city's 22 members of the Bundestag.

The Soviet Union was well aware of the Treaty of Rome and concluded the four-power Berlin agreement accordingly.

How odd that the Soviet Union has so little objection to the ties (or links, depending on interpretation) between East Berlin and the European Community, given that the GDR is rated part of the EEC customs union.

Had this concession not been granted, Bonn would not have signed the Treaty of Rome. But since the GDR derives obvious benefit from this special arrangement it will take good care not to regard it as an impermissible tie with either Bonn or Brussels.

Intra-German trade is flourishing, and both sides are keen to maintain this.

Long-term Soviet strategy still suppears to aim at restricting four-power status in West Berlin both in fact and law.

Looking for symmetry in Berlin relations

The 1975 agreements between Moscow and East Berlin incorporate the characteristic mention of both sides wanting to maintain and develop links with West Berlin.

The aim was to establish symmetry, with West Berlin a special entity, an island in the middle of the GDR, with identical relations with both German states.

East bloc diplomats miss no chance to repeat this point so as to accustom world opinion to a principle that runs counter to both the four-power agreement and the original rights of the three Western Allies.

The West must be equally insistent on maintaining and testifying to its own viewpoint, aimed as it is at stability and detente.

Hans Schuster

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 28 June 1978)

Outcry over dissident's gaol term

The eight-year gaol sentence passed on GDR dissident Rudolf Bahro, 42, by an East Berlin court has been described in the West as outrageous and has brought a deluge of protest.

Spokesmen for political parties and organisations of varying political hues called the sentence a serious breach of human rights and assured Bahro of their solidarity.

The sentence is tantamount to a declaration of political bankruptcy by the *GDR leadership, who attempted to characterise an inconvenient Marxist critic* as a paid agent of the West.

This threadbare excuse for an argument testifies to the helplessness and unscrupulousness of a self-appointed leadership which fears nothing more than the loss of power. Bahro was found guilty on counts of treason and divulging information to the enemy that even many card-carrying members of the Socialist Unity Party (SED) will find hard to swallow.

The accusations were clearly mere pretexts. Bahro has not been gaoled for working for a foreign power but because he dared to pillory an inhuman political system.

In a tone of political conviction verging on the religious, he said before being arrested that the police were powerless in the face of his ideas. The court sentence, endorsed by the SED leadership, does not change matters.

His critique of socialism as it actually exists may only have been published in the West but his views are also hotly debated by fellow-members of the SED.

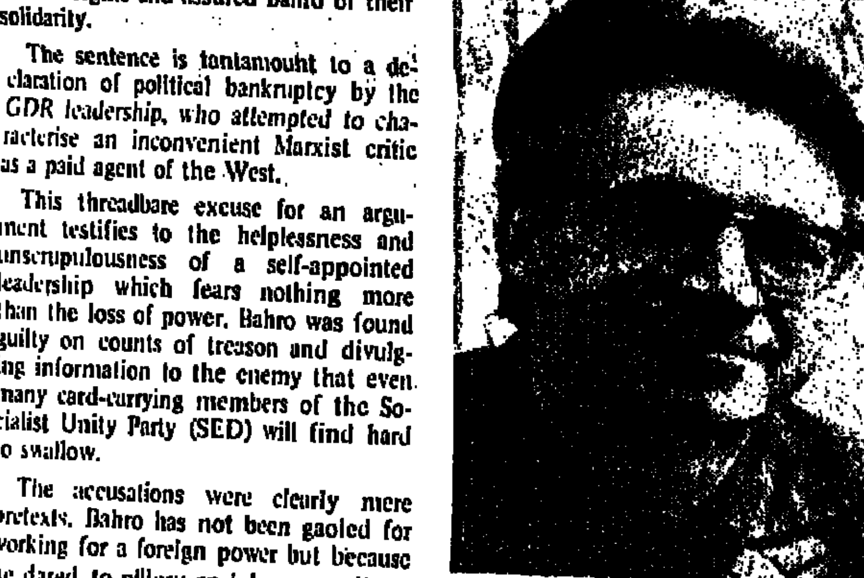
What Bahro has to say about "organised irresponsibility" in the economy is borne out almost daily in the experience of most GDR citizens. The party leadership will feel the pinch of Bahro's trenchant analysis before long.

No more need be said about the feebleness of accusations that Bahro acted for monetary motives. They speak volumes about the mentality of leading SED officials.

Attempts to brand accredited journalists as criminal accomplices in a political conspiracy must however be taken seriously. It is an alarming state of affairs when routine press coverage by West German correspondents is made out to be secret service work.

The Bonn government will have little option but to issue an official statement on the whole affair.

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 3 July 1978)



Rudolf Bahro, East German dissident: eight years for speaking out loud.
(Photo: Süddeutscher Verlag)

African dilemma

Continued from page 1

neer a clash between the Cubans and the South Africans and induce the West to support South Africa. The Kremlin would then have a field day in black Africa.

Those who feel this is a venture into fantasy need only take a closer look at the outcome of Helmut Schmidt's visit to Nigeria and Zambia.

Moscow must feel encouraged. In Nigeria the Chancellor failed to allay the military regime's misgivings about Bonn's cooperation with South Africa.

Herr Schmidt condemed apartheid but opposed an economic boycott of white Africa, still one of this country's major commodity suppliers.

What is more, the Chancellor was unable to induce his hosts in Lagos to condemn Soviet and Cuban intervention in Africa.

Apart from vague promises of economic aid, an undertaking to send neither troops nor arms to South Africa and a commitment to equal rights, Herr Schmidt had so little to offer Zambia that President Kaunda is unlikely to resist calling for Soviet and Cuban assistance should his country be further involved in the Rhodesian fighting.

President Kaunda is so closely allied with the Patriotic Front that guerrilla leader Joshua Nkomo took part in the talks with Chancellor Schmidt.

Nkomo and Kaunda do not want equal rights for the blacks in Rhodesia. What they want is majority rule, and not by electoral means, as the term implies in the West, but obtained by violence unhampered by Western intervention.

The Chancellor's visit to Africa has failed to clarify Bonn's policy towards Africa. Helmut Schmidt is trapped in the Western dilemma. He is vaguely in favour of majority rule but unwilling to contribute more than empty phrases about, say, an all-party conference in Rhodesia.

He is opposed to the East-West conflict spreading to Africa but unable to suggest how to combat Soviet inroads.

He stresses his country's own economic interests but is most unsatisfactory on the subject of the Africans' economic interests.

Foreign Minister Genscher's African policies are based on an impressive edifice of principles. Chancellor Schmidt, like the pragmatist he is, has brought them back to earth.

But Bonn's policy on Africa is neither clearer nor less crisis-prone.

Dieter Schröder

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 30 June 1978)

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■ HOME AFFAIRS

Confident Kohl starts CDU election run-up

Frankfurter Neue Presse

Christian Democrat leader Helmut Kohl has been chairman of the party for five years, longer than any CDU leader since Adenauer, and the overall verdict on his leadership of the Opposition is positive as the CDU starts its confident run-up to the next election.

Kohl, now in Washington for talks with leading American politicians, has already been praised at the highest party level because membership is increasing, grassroots work is successful and the party has achieved fine results in local elections. A number of sensational party conferences have also improved the party's profile.

Only a year ago things looked very different. Shaken by its defeat after a tough election campaign, the party mood was one of resignation and sheer exhaustion. Struggles over the succession to the post of candidate for the chancellorship broke out, but did not come to much because no-one could or wanted to be party and parliamentary party chairman at the same time.

Walter Wallmann, an important integrating figure in the parliamentary party and the CDU-ruled Länder, had to give up party work to take up office as Lord Mayor of Frankfurt.

It took a lot of time and trouble to mend the broken partnership between CDU and CSU. In the parliamentary party, MPs who now found themselves on Opposition benches instead of in government office began to criticise their leader.

Kohl in the meantime had his work cut out trying to get the CSU to agree to a verbal armistice, at least on the question of the CDU-CSU's candidate for the chancellorship and the party's attitude to the FDP. Herr Kohl still has not quite succeeded in this, as the latest issue of Strauss's *Bayernkurier* shows.

Most CDU and CSU members were full of respect and appreciation for the work Kohl did at the party central offices and on long and exhausting elections campaign. The CDU parliamentary party has certainly been the main beneficiary of the 70 to 80-hour weeks which he has put in.

The 48-year-old from the Rhineland-Palatinate gives his colleagues a large degree of independence and is an expert at delegating work. His situation reports are still considered too long in high party circles, but they are accepted as an idiosyncrasy. CDU MPs also point to Kohl's off-the-cuf replies to Wehner and Chancellor Schmidt in debates as another plus.

However, there is still plenty of evidence that there is little unanimity between the CDU and the CSU, quite apart from the still open question of who is to be Opposition candidate for the chancellorship in the next general election. The latest is that Strauss, probably rightly, will not and cannot understand how Kohl proposes to oust Schmidt from office before the next general election.

Kohl believes that after the next Land elections the position of the Bonn coalition government in the Bundesrat will be completely untenable and it will collapse. He is confident that the FDP will then withdraw into opposition in order to regenerate itself and would practise benevolent neutrality towards a CDU minority government.

CSU leader Strauss thinks the idea of Kohl as Chancellor in a minority government is as unrealistic as the view that there will be early elections. In both cases, Schmidt would have to give up office of his own free will.

Kohl is not going to be tempted to depose the Chancellor by means of a constructive vote of no confidence — quite apart from the fact that, unlike Barzel in 1972, he simply does not have enough votes. And no-one in Bonn is interested in another grand coalition between SPD and CDU.

Kohl's self-confidence has been boosted by electoral successes and the response to his election campaigns. He can take his time until the next Bundestag elections in 1980. Then he will probably (certainly in the opinion of the CDU) be the Opposition's candidate for Chancellor.

Insiders think the party will be in top form by then. New general secretary Geissler has tightened up party organisation and transformed it into something like the management of a top industrial concern. He has appointed new heads of department and a new, if politically inexperienced, national secretary. Kohl, the former Rhineland-Palatinate Prime Minister from Mainz, hopes that new brooms will sweep clean in his party headquarterrs.

Karlheinz von den Driesch

(Frankfurter Neue Presse, 30 June 1978)



President Carter welcomes Christian Democrat leader Helmut Kohl to Washington at the beginning of his visit for talks with leading American politicians. (Photo: dpa)

Cool Graf Lambsdorff eyes FDP leadership

The question many politicians in Bonn are asking is; have the Free Dembcrats a future and, if so, under whose leadership?

One thing is as clear as Herbert Wehner's interjections in the Bundestag: if the voters in Hesse and Bavaria follow the example of Hamburg and Lower Saxony and vote the FDP out of the Landtag, then its leadership will no longer be able to avoid making changes.

The FDP will have to say goodbye to luckless party leader and tactician Hans-Dietrich Genscher. The oaths of solidarity and loyalty which his followers made after the June 4 disaster will not mean much after a second disastrous defeat.

Only one member of the FDP leadership dared to criticise the party leader, among others, after the catastrophic results in Lower Saxony and Hamburg — Dr Otto Graf Lambsdorff, lawyer, former financial adviser and now Minister of Economic Affairs.

Lambsdorff's next goal is clear: to become leader of the FDP. Not only the conservatives but also the centre and the moderate left in the party would be prepared to replace Genscher, whose powers seem to be declining, with the eloquent and energetic Lambsdorff.

Of course Lambsdorff's party opponents such as Hamburg left-winger Helga Schuchardt will continue to make public their dislike of the Baltic landgrave. However, "His Eloquence, Count Silvercane" (Lambsdorff was wounded in the war and needs a walking stick), reacts to personal hostility with cool composure, unlike sensitive party leader Genscher. He says: "Someone who looks like Frau Schuchardt cannot insult me."

The 52-year-old Lambsdorff, who had to wait longer than most liberals for his chance, is determined to take it without hesitation. A member of the FDP since 1951 and far from unsuccessful in party work, he did not gain a seat in the Bundestag until 1972. In his constituency in the Eifel there are rumoured to be many CDU voters who decided to vote for Lambsdorff, a consistent advocate of the free market economy, rather than the obscure CDU candidate.

Kurt Biedenkopf, who realised when he was CDU general secretary that Lambsdorff appealed to large numbers of regular CDU voters, always reacts extremely tetchily to the count's political pronouncements. Early riser Lambsdorff has obviously planned his irresistible rise to the top with care.

When the election results came through on the evening of June 4 and the FDP were looking for scapegoats, Lambsdorff openly demanded in an interview that Werner Maihofer, then Bonn Minister of the Interior, resign. His main aim was to concentrate attention on attributing blame for blunders in the Schleyer case on Maihofer, thereby diverting attention from North Rhine-Westphalia Minister of the Interior Hirsch, who had also come in for criticism over the affair.

Lambsdorff reckoned that Hirsch's gratitude would be transformed into friendship and active support when it came to a change in the party leadership in Bonn.

Anyone who wants to bring about change in Bonn, in Lambsdorff's view, must have the support of the North Rhine-Westphalia Free Democrats. He realises what counts and as a man who would not object to a change of coalition partners, it seems to him that an arrangement with Hirsch's social-liberals is simply an act of practical reason.

Münchner Merkur

Lambsdorff is a man of high intelligence, as he proved when he was party financial spokesman and author of programmes. He is also, unlike Genscher, a man of firm political principles.

It would be a mistake to put too much stress on his ambition and his careerism. To represent him as a man of unlimited ambition is unfair. He tells his children: "You can choose any profession or any course you want — only at the end you have to make sure you are better than your competitors." What better definition could there be of performance in a free-market economy?

Karl Hugo Pruys

(Münchner Merkur, 26 June 1978)



Man with a clear goal: Minister of Economic Affairs Otto Graf Lambsdorff.
(Photo: Sven Simon)

■ BERLIN

The blockade that tested the will of the West

Thirty years ago, on 29 July 1948, Allied airmen launched the airlift that thwarted Stalin's bid to take over West Berlin. Former enemies became friends during the 328-day blockade as seven thousand tons of food and essentials were flown in daily. Sixty people died in the unprecedented operation to relieve a beleaguered city.

Keep it up, America! We Berliners are right behind you," a banner proclaimed shortly after the beginning of the Berlin blockade 30 years ago on 23 June 1948.

It was a somehow typical comment, demonstrating with characteristic Berlin wit that erstwhile enemies had come to be seen as friends and allies in a war on hunger and hardship.

Suddenly the occupying powers were hailed as protecting powers, affording protection from Stalin's iron embrace.

The Soviet generalissimo, determined to take over the former German capital and end its four-power status, decided to starve the Western half of the divided city into subjection.

Marshal Kotikov, Soviet garrison commander and C-in-C of the city of Berlin, issued an order of the day dated 24 June requiring food from the Soviet Zone to be stored exclusively in the Soviet sector of the city.

Food rations were to be issued in the Soviet sector only, and milk deliveries to West Berlin from the Soviet Zone were expressly prohibited.

This ban was enforced at a time when the population of West Berlin included 120,192 children under six and 236,881 children between the ages of seven and fourteen.

Yet supplies from surrounding areas were badly needed because road, rail and inland waterway links between Berlin and the Western zones had been severed "for technical reasons" in the early morning hours of 23 June.

The Soviet authorities said this was a temporary measure but the blockade had been on the cards for some time.

At the beginning of 1948 road hauliers linking West Berlin with surrounding areas in the Soviet Zone had been so hampered that traffic was brought to a virtual standstill.

The only vehicles that were allowed to cross the border were those on work approved by the Soviet military administration and equipped with a covering note in Russian.

In March parcel traffic between West Germany and Berlin was brought to a halt. From May on parcels could only be handled by post offices in the Soviet sector of the dity.

"Snoopers' parcels" the Berliners called them, since parcels posted in this way had to be handed in open for inspection before despatch.

That spring the chief of staff of the Soviet military administration walked out of the Allied control commission, practically ending four-power responsibility for the city as a whole.

The control commission increasingly became the scene of disputes between the commanding officers of the four sectors. On 1 April, for instance, Soviet officers stopped the US express train en route from Frankfurt to Berlin and sent it back to Frankfurt.

A few days laters the same fate befell freight trains with supplies for the US garrison in Berlin. On 5 April a Soviet Yak fighter buzzed a British airliner near Magdeburg.

The two aircraft collided in mid-air and the airliner crashed, killing ten passengers and crew.

Stalin hoped these pinpricks would persuade America, Britain and France to withdraw from Berlin. He felt he would be able to force the West to capitulate by starving out the two million-odd people of West Berlin, who would then turn against the Western Allies.

The originator of the airlift was Lieutenant-General Sir Brian Robertson, the British military governor, who suggested flying in supplies after General Lucius D. Clay had applied in vain to the Pentagon for permission to break the blockade with a convoy of 200 trucks escorted by Allied tanks.

Washington had empowered General Clay to go ahead with his autobahn convoy, but the convoy was not to proceed if refused permission to do so by Soviet troops at Marienborn. Since this refusal was a virtual certainty the Pentagon had to all intents and purposes vetoed General Clay's blockade buster.

The US general was not initially keen on the airlift proposal, but Sir Brian persevered, calling on Whitehall to requisition aircraft.

On 28 June Mr Attlee's Cabinet and President Truman's administration agreed to stay in Berlin and airlift supplies for the civilian population.

The following day an unprecedented airborne operation began. The world had never before seen the like of the Berlin airlift. One can but hope the need will never arise again.

The municipal authorities estimated monthly foodstuff supplies for two million people as follows: 17,000 tons of flour, 3,080 tons of meat or fish, 920 tons of fat, 1,500 tons of sugar, 3,000 tons of fodder, 300 tons of cheese, 27,000 tons of potatoes, 330 tons of coffee or coffee substitute, 4,320 tons of vegetables and 40,000 tons of milk.

This, they computed, was the minimum needed to honour food ration coupons intended to ensure a daily intake of 1,879 calories per adult.

Ten tons was the maximum payload a transport aircraft could carry 30 years ago.

Coal also had to be airlifted in — for industrial and domestic use and to generate electric power. Car tyres, petrol and diesel oil also had to be flown in.

In June 1948 there were 7,296 private cars, 19,587 commercial vehicles, 144 omnibuses and 2,107 motorcycles in West Berlin. In the first six months of 1948 they used 2,700 tons of petrol and diesel fuel.

Between July and December 2,300 tons of petrol and 193 tons of diesel oil were airlifted to West Berlin for civilian use, municipal statistics for 1948 record.

The statistics do not quantify other consumer goods such as sewing needles, razor blades and babies' dummies — or, for that matter, newsprint, the authorities having decided that West Berlin newspapers were to continue to appear, albeit as four-page broadsheets.

Fodder too needed flying in, since West Berlin boasted 3,785 horses (including 350 thoroughbreds) and 5,315 head of cattle, including 3,495 dairy cows with an invaluable daily output of 14,515 litres of fresh milk.

The airlift, a demonstration of the determination of free men to remain free, cost 60 lives. Thirty-one US airmen, 18

Kieler Nachrichten

RAF pilots and crewmen and 11 civilians died during the 328-day mission.

US and British airmen flew on regardless, maintaining the airlift along narrow air corridors. They paid no attention to fog or snow, flew day and night and took interference by Soviet fighters and radio operators in their stride.

"Up till three years ago I flew bombs to Berlin day and night," a US pilot told an interviewer. "I might as well fly in currants now."

From then on the Skymasters and Dakotas were dubbed "currant bombers" by the people of Berlin.

The airlift called for prodigious feats by both aircrews and control tower staff. Their success must have infuriated Stalin, but by January 1949 the Soviet leader indicated in an interview with US journalists that he might be prepared to end the blockade.

On 12 May 1949 the blockade was lifted. West Berlin's 2,086,234 inhabitants had cocked a snook at Stalin. Despite rations consisting mainly of dried food, despite power blackouts and coal rations of 25lb for the entire winter they steadfastly refused to draw rations from the Soviet sector and capitulate to force majeure.

Herbert Schulze-Andree
(Kieler Nachrichten, 27 June 1978)



Mercy flight: West Berlin children watch an aircraft take off to fetch supplies for the cut-off city during the Soviet blockade of 1948. (Photo: dpa)

Big welcome for new aid programme

Political and business leaders in West Berlin have welcomed the new aid programme for the divided city drafted by political parties in the Bonn Bundestag since November 1977.

Mayor Dietrich Stobbe says the aid package, designed to heighten the attraction of the city, testifies to a "new quality in the attitude of Bonn toward Berlin."

The key feature of the package, which will eventually have cost DM900m or so, is the gradual abolition of trades tax, starting in 1980. Trades tax is a major source of local government revenue.

The initial reduction will cost DM 100m a year. Total abolition will cost DM360m in a full year. The federal government in Bonn will provide the cash instead.

Political parties in the Bundestag have had their way on this point, overruling the misgivings of both Chancellor Schmidt and Finance Minister Matthöfer.

West Berlin's chamber of commerce and industry reports that a number of potential investors have made enquiries about industrial development in the divided city should trades tay be abolished.

This gesture to the business community, especially small- and medium-sized companies, has been accompanied by a substantial increase in family allowances from DM22 to DM50 per child.

A number of other incentives are also designed to induce West German workers to settle in West Berlin, but a further feature of the Bonn aid package is a federal government grant towards the construction of 500 apartments for newcomers to the city.

Experts likewise reckon the additional aid to the arts will make a mark, expecially the grants towards regular exhibitions of international importance, including an annual film festival.

The museums too are to be granted additional funds to buy major works of art.

West Berlin's telecommunications research facilities are to be boosted to research centre status, which is sure to have economic repercussions.

The divided city might well emerge as the hub not only of new ideas in communications engineering but also of their conversion into manufacturing techniques.

Political and business opinion in West Berlin is less enthusiastic about Bonn's decision to defer additional subsidies of air traffic to and from the city.

This decision is to be reviewed with regard to its repercussions and the possibility of lending other assistance. A critical look will be taken at the performance of airlines serving West Berlin.

In Bonn the decision is justified with reference to the federal government's readiness to invest heavily in overland transit routes to and from the divided city.

In Berlin observers note that the viability of air services which are the city's sole link with the West that is not liable to East bloc interference is of vital importance.

Only recently the GDR has refused to allow buses to pass through to West Berlin by road. This shows, it is argued, how important civil aviation may continue to prove.

Friedhelm Kemna
(Die Welt, 21 June 1978)

■ POLITICAL FRINGE

Right-wing extremists not increasing says official

Right-wing extremists seem to be becoming more active and more violent. The raid on the Nato arms depot in Bergen-Hohne by members of the Dörpstedt "Armed Sport Group" and the planned attack on the Kiel offices of the KBW, a communist organisation, are two recent examples. Is right-wing violence now becoming the counterpart of left-wing violence? *Kieler Nachrichten* interviews Alfred Kuhn, head of the Schleswig-Holstein Office for the Protection of the Constitution.

Herr Kuhn's first point is that the Office for the Protection of the Constitution has no evidence of a numerical increase in right-wing extremism.

Recently there has been a shift away from the "played-out" NPD towards even more extreme right-wing groups, but there has been no increase in total numbers.

According to Kuhn there are about 800 right-wing extremists in Schleswig-Holstein, 30 of whom are neo-Nazis.

The neo-Nazis work in small conspiratorial groups of up to five. Some groups are larger. Their political aim is the rebirth of National Socialism.

These neo-Nazi groups are not new but for many years their radicalism was purely verbal whereas public attention was firmly fixed on the NPD.

They consist mainly of younger members who have left the NPD and the National Democratic youth movement. But there are older members among them such as Thies Christophersen and lawyer Röder who fled and went into hiding in Brazil recently.

The Office for the Protection of the Constitution has not discovered any specific sociological traits among these neo-Nazis.

Most of them come from the lower middle classes, there are few women or students among them. some are unemployed and there are a few "armed sport" fans among them who get a kick out of that kind of activity.

The strange thing abut these groups is that for many years they did nothing but talk, as Alfred Kuhn puts it. Now suddenly they seem to have members who are capable of resorting to violence.

These groups have moved from words to actions in a relatively short time.

They do not yet have a hierarchy. The Office for the Protection of the Constitution has information that efforts are being made to set up a nationwide organisation. There are also efforts to set up an underground organisation à la Werwolf.

Kuhn stresses that these efforts have been thwarted by the smashing of the Rohwer group and of another Kiel group which planned the attack on the KBW offices.

There are fears that left and right-wing extremists might spur one another on to increasing violence. Kuhn considers this a serious possibility.

There are already signs of this — fights and mutual insults. The recent events in Frankfurt point in the this direction.

According to Kuhn, right-wing violence cannot be seen as a reaction to left-wing violence. The right-wing extremists have in his view realised that a certain amount of success can be achieved by using violence.

Kuhn rejects the view that the increase in right-wing violence is connected with the recent wave of right-wing literature. He describes this wave as purely a commercial phenomenon.

Kuhn strongly rejects the view that the Schleswig-Holstein Office for the Protection of the Constitution does not pay enough attention to right-wing extremism. The SPD has even said that it is "blind in one eye."

Kuhn says that the Office for the POrotection of the Constitution decides its priorities according to the situation. Right-wing extremism is under as intensive observation as left-wing extremism.

In view of the Third Reich and foreign opinion, there is high sensitivity to right-wing activities throughout the Office for the Protection of the Constitution.

This nonetheless does not mean that it exaggerated the importance of these activities.

Up to now, according to Kuhn, the results of surveillance have not warranted widespread publicity. Right-wing extremism has only achieved a certain amount of importance in the past months.

Right-wing extremists show a "certain potential for violence" which makes them worthy of closer attention than they have previously been given.

Herr Kuhn does not believe that right-wing violence can be compared with the violence of the extreme left including terrorist groups at the moment. "But things are," he says, "developing."

Falk Osberger
(Kieler Nachrichten, 21 June 1978)

Bundeswehr general acts against right extremist

General Gert Bastian, commander of the Bundeswehr's 12th tank division, is to start proceedings against right-wing extremist Erwin Schönborn.

Schönborn lives in Frankfurt and is notorious for his assertion that the mass killing of Jews during the Second World War is "one of the greatest lies of all time."

Schönborn has described Robert Kempner, former US prosecutor at Nuremberg, as a Zionist super-criminal.

He has said that Joachim C. Fest, author of the book Hitler — A Career and director of the film of the same name, as a liar and a swindler.

He has claimed that Simon Wiesenthal's aim is to exterminate all Germans.

He told the Ugandan head of state Idi Amin that he had made the Ugandan soldiers who were killed in the raid on Entebbe honorary members of his extreme right-wing Kampfbund Deutscher Soldaten (League of German Soldiers).

Gert Bastian and troops of the 12th tank division which he commands were also sent Schönborn's brown propaganda. Bastian replied to Neo-Nazi Schönborn:

"Please note that I do not in future wish to receive such rubbish from you, nor do I wish to be adressed as Kame-

Vorwärts

rad. There is nothing whatsoever in common between your appalling way of thinking and the willingness of Bundeswehr soldiers to defend the law and freedom of the German people.

"Nor do you have the right to misuse the name League of German Soldiers. The ethical content of this term has nothing to do with your rabble-rousing."

Schönborn was angry with the general when he received this reply. He complained that the divisional commander haad not even addressed him correctly, praised his own bravery in the face of US "imperialism" during the war and insulted the officers who took part in the 1944 plot to assassinate Hitler.

This was too much for the general. He informed Schönborn that he was one of the "Nazi arsonists" who must at all costs be prevented from plunging the German nation into misfortune once again.

He defended the officers in the June 20 plot and wrote: "I am not prepared to allow you to cast aspersions on men who gave their lives trying to free Germany from a criminal tyranny."

Bastian instituted legal proceedings. The State Prosecutor at the Land Court in Frankfurt is examining whether what Schönborn wrote is actionable in law.

All has not always been well in the Bundeswehr in the matter of the connections between certain officers and right-wing extremists. General Gert Bastian has partly made up for these past failings in this case.

He recently forbade his music corps to play the Badenweiler March. He received angry and complimentary letters after this move.

Attempting to be very sharp-witted, some said that in that case one ought logically to forbid apple strudel and peppermint tea because Adolf Hitler liked them and recommend tobacco and alcohol because Hitler did not use them.

Gert Bastian gave the right answer. He complained of an astonishing incapacity to differentiate. The Badenweiler March was special because it was Hitler's theme tune and its use was forbidden on all other occasions. Playing it would evoke the painful memories of the Nazi era.

The reason for the ban was that during a public performance by the divisional music corps a civilian by the name of Hittler asked the Bundeswehr band to play this march and then conducted it himself.

Leonhard Schwarz
(Vorwärts, 29 June 1978)

Fight against terror 'must be worldwide'

The scourge of terrorism is not a purely national matter. It can only be combated effectively by means of international cooperation, so that the terrorists have no hiding place.

They must be made to realise that they have the entire international community of states gainst them. The capture of Till Meyer, who was freed from Moabit prison, Berlin, recently, and of a number of other suspected terrorists in Bulgaria and their swift extradition to this country by the Bulgarian authorities is a positive example of international cooperation.

It may at first sight appear surprising that Bulgaria, which has no extradition treaty with this country, was so ready to comply with the federal CID's request for cooperation, despite the fact that two of the suspects fall under the jurisdiction of Berlin.

The communist states have realised that the terrorists, who use radical left wing arguments, represent a threat to them and their credibility.

What they will do when they catch terrorists who work together with the PLO, which they support, remains to be seen. It should not be forgotten that East Berlin Soviet ambassador Pyotr Abrassimov said in a recent talks with West Berlin mayor Dietrich Stobbe that the Soviet Union would do everything in its power within its sphere of influence to bring terrorists to justice.

Whether, like Yugoslavia, they will make such cooperation conditional upon the extradition of Soviet offenders and opponents of the Soviet regime in the West remains to be seen.

Luck played a part in the capture of Till Meyer. A Berlin prison official recognised Meyer while he was on hiliday in Bulgaria. This fact was at first meant to be kept secret in the interests of the prison official's safety.

The Berlin justice department, whose senator has been under pressure to resign because of Meyer's escape, made the news public despite this, no doubt for the purpose of self-praise. We will leave the public to make its own judgment on this action.

(Der Tagesspiegel, 23 June 1978)

Political brawl alarms cities

Recent brawls in which over 100 people were injured at an NPD meeting in Frankfurt have alarmed the authorities in a number of other cities.

They are no longer prepared to put public meeting places at the disposal of this extreme right-wing party.

On the other hand, many local councils are unable to do anything to prevent NPD activities because there have been a number of court rulings in their favour. After the bloody street fighting in Frankfurt, the Cologne authorities said they would not in future give permission for the NPD to hold meetings.

Dortmund has said it will not allow NPD meetings in critical situations. Hanover will consider bans "only in the case of immediate danger of violence."

Other towns, such as Kiel and Bielefeld, will only allow NPD metings if security requirements are met. Konstanz, Überlingen and Friedrichshafen all intend to follow the hard Cologne line.

In Berlin special Allied regulations forbid NPD activities.

dpa
(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 20 June 1978)

TRADE

Greater optimism among exporters

Frankfurter Allgemeine

German export prospects have improved. Fresh optimism is based primarily on the calming down of the hitherto hectic foreign exchange markets.

Only a couple of months ago, the progressive revaluation of the deutschemark made German exports steadily more expensive on international markets — over and above price increases at home.

But the exchange rates of the US dollar and the French franc have improved markedly in the past couple of weeks.

This is largely due to Germany's headway on the stability front, although this does not fully offset the price increases of German goods that exceed the international sliding scale of inflation.

But the "number one export risk" as the Standing Conference of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry so aptly put it, has lost some of its acuteness.

Preliminary estimates for the current year are not pessimistic at all. Though it is generally expected that the world economy will show only slight improvement, there is no indication of stagnation or recession.

The forecasts concerning growth in real terms in the most important industrial nations speak of an average 3.5 per cent, a similar — and not bad — growth rate to last year's.

Growth in the world's most important industrial and trading country, the United States, is expected to slow down a bit to a real four per cent (from last year's 4.9 per cent). But in Japan growth will reach seven per cent, exceeding the 1977 level.

In Western Europe (above all France and Holland), demand is also expected to increase. This will lead to an increase in German exports of about four to five per cent.

Such forecasts are quite realistic considering the influx of foreign orders. Though there has been some fluctuation in the volume of orders from month to month, recent figures indicate a further increase.

Thus, for instance, foreign buyers ordered six per cent more goods in March and April than in the previous two months.

The basic materials and finished products have an above-average share in this increase while capital goods and consumer goods are below average with five and 3.5 per cent respectively.

The orders do not indicate a specific improvement for any particular branch of industry, as was the case last year.

While there is little change in mechanical and electrical engineering (two of the most important export branches), motor vehicles, chemicals and iron and steel can justifiably expect livelier business.

Compared with the relatively moderate orders due to a still halting economic development among our major trading partners, actual export shipments have been quite satisfactory.

In the period from January to May, the increase in exports amounted to four per cent over the same period last year. This is most encouraging considering the high export level in 1977.

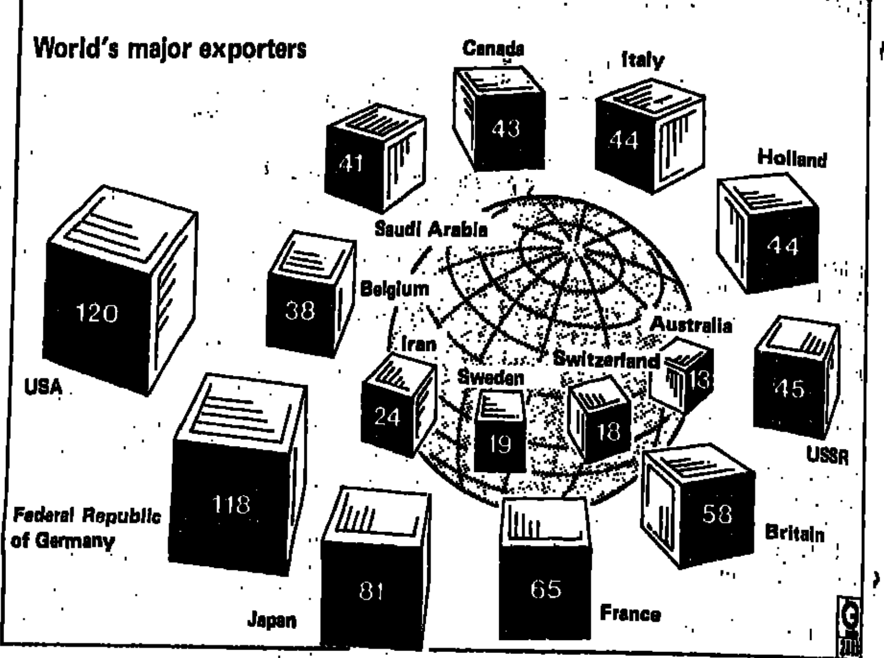
But this increase has not been achieved on a broad front. Only a very few industrial nations — Germany's most important customers — stepped up their purchases quite considerably.

The increase in our exports is primarily attributable to purchases by the United States and Japan. Saudi Arabia and Nigeria bought about 33 per cent more German goods in the first quarter of this year than during the same period 1977 level.

In view of dollar depreciation it might seem surprising that exports to the United States increased over last year — especially since 1977 was a very good year. But this additional demand is probably due to bottlenecks resulting from the severe winter.

Exports to Japan have been rising since mid-1977. Japanese demand is above average due to the exceptional growth rate in that country.

On the other hand, German shipments to France, Italy, Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Spain did not reach the figure for the first quarter of 1977 — probably due to the poor economic conditions in those countries.



Iran and Algeria have also bought less — probably due to lower demand for oil. Among the 20 largest suppliers, Britain, Schwitzerland, Austria, Japan, Denmark, Spain and (above all) the Soviet Union and Norway were particularly successful.

Norway, for instance, showed an increase by two-thirds and went six places ahead in the list. Britain, Switzerland and Austria achieved increases of between 16 and 19 per cent.

This shows how much Germany supported the economic development among its major trading partners.

German demand for foreign goods increased at about four times the rate of the GNP increase. Imports during the first quarter of this year rose by a real nine per cent over the same period last year.

The share of capital goods and finished products in overall imports has been rising continually. Close to one-quarter of our imports are capital goods, two-fifths being finished products.

These higher imports have considerably reduced our much criticised trade surplus.

In real terms, our foreign trade surplus during the first five months of this year was about DM1,000 million lower than in the same period of 1977.

Lothar Julitz

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 28 June 1978)

Five Wise Men call for tax cuts

Every summer the political parties and experts start talking about tax cuts, and rightly so. Our tax system imposes low taxes on low incomes while taxing medium incomes higher and high incomes even more. This is the sliding scale system of income tax.

But when incomes keep rising due to inflation, more and more people are affected by high tax brackets that are both unjustified and unsocial.

On the one hand, the people thus affected get less and less for their money due to higher prices and, on the other, they pay more taxes.

If the standard of living of people with medium incomes is not to drop,

Hannoversche Allgemeine

the state must level off its tax progression from time to time.

Such tax adjustments are therefore a necessary fiscal process. Unfortunately, discussions on tax cuts are usually based on wrong premises.

Whenever politicians and experts notice that the economy is not developing as it seemed to be doing at the beginning of the year, they start discussing tax cuts, creating the impression that this would bring instant improvements and create new jobs. But this is a mistaken assumption.

The Council of Economic Advisers — the Five Wise Men — have pointed this out, but their special report, with its demand for a reduction of income tax on the eve of the 17 July Bonn economic summit, creates the impression that lower taxes are the great trump card.

Their special report (commissioned by neither the government nor the Opposition) was superfluous inasmuch as the strategy of providing long-term economic growth through tax cuts has been mentioned before in their annual report.

Regular reviews of the income tax sliding scade are necessary if incentive is not to be stifled. Once achievement is no longer worthwhile, no-one will be inventive and people will not risk starting a business, which means that the economy will stop growing.

All parties are agreed on this; they only argue about the date for the new tax reform. The CDU/CSU want it to become effective at the beginning of 1979. The FDP, worried about its political survival, now also holds this view. The SPD is still non-committal.

Since it is more and more likely that tax reform will come into effect in 1979, the Christian Democrats would have every reason to rejoice if they had not constantly demanded that the government deficit be reduced.

After all, the state cannot repay debts with reduced revenues. This is the reason why Social and Free Democrats hesitated until recently to implement the reforms as of 1979.

The deficit must not be permitted to grow unchecked, otherwise generations to come would no longer be able to pay our debts, and inflation would gallop again.

The decision as to the date for the tax reform should depend on the time it takes for tax revenues to start rising following the reduction of income tax that became effective at the beginning of this year.

There is much to indicate that, as early as 1979, the incomes of too many citizens will once more become subject to excessive tax rates.

The Five Wise Men also demand a reduction of trading and wage bill taxes. All parties have delved into this before. After all, it is only natural to reduce taxes that penalise employment — especially at a time of unemployment. And the wage bill tax does exactly that.

Those who lament the fact that too many companies are going bankrupt and that too few people are going into business must ask themselves why somebody should be taxed just because he is engaged in business.

But the wage bill and trading taxes cannot be abolished from one day to the next due to the difficult problem of tax distribution between the federal government, the Länder and the municipalities. Moreover, revenue losses would be considerable.

To offset this, consumer taxes would have to be increased and this is likely to meet with resistance from the trade unions and the SPD.

Still, the federal government would be well advised to bear in mind that there is hardly anything better it can do to stimulate economic growth and improve the situation on the labour market than to abolish taxes that penalise enterprise and curb employment.

Peter Christian Müller

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 21 June 1978)

OIL

Veba sells oil and gas capacity to BP

Rudolf von Bennigsen-Foerder, board chairman of Veba, the fuel and power utility, travelled to Bonn one Tuesday in June with mixed feelings.

His purpose was to explain to the company's major shareholder, the Bonn government, which holds a 43.7-per-cent stake in Veba, the details of an impending deal.

The deal seemed, on the face of it, to run counter to Veba's declared objective of becoming a major national oil company and thereby securing petroleum supplies on a safer basis.

So the Veba board chairman faced the daunting task of convincing Detlev Rohwedder, Social Democrat, state secretary in Bonn and a government nominee on Veba's supervisory board, of the deal's advisability.

His brief was to argue that a smaller Veba is better for the country than the company in the state it has been in of late and that selling refineries, trading activities and filling stations to BP is in the public interest.

This must surely be a difficult proposition to accept, given the Bonn government's financial commitment and declared aims. Bonn lent Veba an enormous amount of money in the first place to take over Gelsenberg, its oil and petrochemicals division.

The takeover emerged as a distinct possibility prior to the oil crisis, but preparations did not switch into top gear until after the Opec countries had imposed the oil embargo that shook the West.

Veba's takeover of Gelsenberg was hailed at the time in Bonn as a masterstroke of national energy policy. Veba themselves reckoned they were on to a winner. Both were bitterly disappointed.

The takeover masterminds had no joy at all with their brainchild. The new-look Veba sailed into the red in its oil operations at such a rate that disaster seemed imminent.

By the end of last year Veba and Gelsenberg had run up aggregate losses totalling roughly DM1,300m. Veba was DM850m. in debt. Gelsenberg had accumulated a DM350m. deficit.

Veba had expected to make a handsome profit for reinvestment in crude oil. Instead the Düsseldorf board seemed to be spending most of their time juggling with losses.

They were also engaged in trench warfare with the German divisions of Esso and Shell, neither of whom were enthusiastic about the oil *dirigisme* envisaged by BP and Veba.

Esso and Shell were losing money in the filling station forecourts but fortunately able to set against these losses profits on oil and natural gas produced in the Federal Republic.

Veba were certainly unable to go on to the offensive, and board chairman Bennigsen-Foerder grew increasingly anxious about the future of his company, which boasts the country's largest turnover.

In the end he decided to attack as the best means of defence, hiving off part of the envisaged national oil company in order to salvage the remainder.

Bonn's reaction to the prospective deal he had to outline came as a pleasant surprise. Government spokesmen nodded approvingly, giving him the go-ahead.

So it was that 48 hours later the supervisory board gave its blessing to a spectacular deal that for once had not been leaked to the Press in advance.

Approval was unanimous, with worker directors showing decided enthusiasm. Alfons Cojaniz, supervisory board member and chairman of the Veba works council, even saw the deal as a "smash hit."

By Friday Benni and Buddi, as Veba boss Rudolf von Bennigsen-Foerder and BP board chairman Hellmuth Buddenberg have been dubbed, were enthusing about the deal to hastily convened Press conferences.

Benni in Düsseldorf and Buddi in Hamburg explained at length why they were both convinced they had clinched the deal of a lifetime.

At times it was hard to believe they were talking about the same deal. Veba reckoned to be selling 5.3 million tons of refinery capacity, whereas BP claimed to be buying a mere 3.7 million tons, for instance.

While Bennigsen-Foerder talked in terms of selling 6.1 million tons of oil sales, Buddenberg reckoned he had purchased 7.5 million tons of market potential.

It was, of course, the old, old story. Each was interpreting the figures in the best possible light from his respective viewpoint, to prove that he had pulled off a really advantageous deal.

These overall figures are less important than the sectors of the market to which they refer. Veba, it transpires, are selling products they are having trouble marketing.

Veba, who hold a 56-per-cent stake in Aral, the leading brand-name motor fuel and filling station network, will be shedding only two per cent of their slice of the petrol and diesel oil cake, with the slices being reduced in size from 17 to 15 and from 13 to 11 per cent respectively.

Lightweight central heating oil, on the other hand, is another matter. Veba's share stands to shrink from 22 to 15 per cent of the market, and from 25 to 15 per cent in the case of heavy oil, which has proved even more difficult to sell.

BP have shouldered in return a burden only partly alleviated by up-to-the-minute refinery capacity at Ingolstadt.

Juggling with figures merely distracts attention from the true motives. Veba and BP have contrasting interests mainly because BP is awash with crude oil whereas Veba is a have-not.

For decades BP has been an over-producer internationally, producing more oil than it can market via its own retail outlets.

With Veba the reverse is the case. Veba has only just started to establish a crude oil base of its own. Until North Sea oil started flowing from Veba's share of the Thistle Field the company had to rely on Libyan crude.

Veba's only guaranteed source of crude oil was the old Gelsenberg concession amounting to 1.5 million tons a year from Libya at prices only marginally below market rates.

In striking a deal with BP Veba have now not only pruned their crude oil requirements, concentrating processing at their remaining refineries, but also made sure of an additional three million tons a year until the end of the century.

This oil may not be supplied at concessional rates but the price will be competitive even if oil grows scarce.

Together with the Libyan concession and 2.3 million tons a year from the North Sea Veba's oil division manager Fritz Oschmann, who virtually shed tears of joy when the contract was signed, now has direct access to seven million tons of crude oil a year. Veba's current annual requirements are 16.5 million.

Oschmann's long-term aim is to gain direct access to supplies amounting to two thirds of requirements. He stands to benefit from the DM800m. in cash BP are to pay Veba.

Bennigsen-Foerder claims this cash payment is an appropriate reimbursement for the capacity Veba is selling but would hardly have been sufficient had it not been for the additional agreement to supply crude.

He was particularly reluctant to part company with Veba's stake in Ruhrgas. The Veba board chairman now says the Ruhrgas stake was merely financial, providing no scope for business initiative, but he is nonetheless reluctant to wave goodbye to gas, which seems sure to prove a money-spinner.

But after lengthy negotiations with all and sundry he realised that he would be unable to hive off surplus refinery capacity unless this attractive sideline formed part of the arrangement.

Most of his potential clients were keener still to sink their teeth into a division of Veba with which he was not prepared to part company at any price: Aral.

In selling Veba's Ruhrgas holding Bennigsen-Foerder has also been obliged to wave goodbye to Gelsenberg, still a prestigious name.

In order to forestall disputes and to preclude the possibility of other Ruhrgas shareholders letting the cat out of the bag Veba are selling BP the entire Gelsenberg outfit.

Gelsenberg are now no more than the holdings in Ruhrgas and DFTG, the Wilhelmshaven natural gas port and pipeline facilities.

A few days before the deal with BP was made public Bennigsen-Foerder as supervisory board chairman of Ruhrgas took Ruhrgas management board chairman Klaus Liesen quietly to one side and told him what was about to happen.

Veba may have sold the most important part of the Gelsenberg legacy apart from Aral but can nonetheless pride itself on having fared well.

Gelsenberg will have cost roughly DM1,000m. including outstanding payments to shareholders. Veba will have recouped nearly DM600m. by selling the Ruhrgas and refinery holdings.

In return for the remaining investment totalling roughly DM400m, Veba will retain control of:

- 28 per cent of Aral AG,
- 18 per cent of Deminex,
- Gelsenkirchen and Neustadt refineries,
- oil in Libya and natural gas in Holland,
- Raab Karcher AG, a wide-ranging trading company,
- Mönchsmünster petrochemicals plant
- and housing and property worth well over DM100m.

The deal with BP is, of course, a retrograde step in the light of Veba's aim of establishing its credentials as a major national oil company.

Heinz-Günter Kemmer

(Die Zeit, 23 June 1978)

Veba are selling:

Ruhrgas AG, Essen, 25-per-cent holding
DFTG-Deutsche Flüssigerdgas Terminal GmbH, Wilhelmshaven, 31-per-cent holding
Erdölraffinerie Ingolstadt AG (capacity seven million tons p.a.), Ingolstadt, 25-per-cent holding
Erdölraffinerie Speyer Elf-Gelsenberg oHG, (capacity seven million tons p.a.), Speyer, 25-per-cent holding
Stromeyer GmbH Mülheim/Ruhr, 100 per cent. This company will include the domestic fuel trade of Stinnes AG, with annual turnover of roughly DM3,000m., including DM2,500m. in liquid fuels and DM500m. in coal.
Fanal filling stations (roughly 1,000), previously owned by Stinnes AG.

BP are paying:
DM800m. in cash, payable at the beginning of 1979 by Deutsche BP AG, plus an option for the supply of three million tons of crude a year until the year 2000 by British Petroleum, London.

Low growth but profit – Esso

Esso of Hamburg, the German subsidiary of Exxon, the world's largest oil multi, expects domestic energy consumption and oil turnover to increase by two per cent at most this year.

Board chairman Wolfgang Oehme does not expect any substantial improvement on this performance trend next year either.

Oil sales in the first quarter of 1978 may have been up nine per cent on the corresponding period last year, but Esso reckons the increase was due to a long winter in which demand for heating oil was up by 20 per cent.

The motor fuel market, Herr Oehme says, is the unsteadiest of all at present. Major brand-name companies and distributors will not for long be able to allow independent operators to increase their share of the market by means of markedly lower prices on the filling-station forecourt.

Petrol prices are likely to go up before the summer holiday season starts in earnest, but Esso does not expect price increases worth mentioning for heating oil.

Last year Esso voluntarily allowed its share of the market to backslide slightly, since oil was not selling at a profit. The loss per ton of crude was DM16, as against DM11 in 1976.

With turnover totalling 19.9 million tons, as against 21.3 million the year before, Esso claims to have sustained a loss of DM320 million.

So last year the company was not able to offset this loss on the oil side entirely by means of profits from domestic oil and natural gas operations.

In fiscal 1977 Esso of Hamburg recorded an operational deficit of DM56m., which is worth bearing in mind in view of the current debate about exceptional profits from domestic oil and gas.

This year Esso expect to lose DM9 per ton of crude oil, which was the figure for January to May. But Herr Oehme reckons the balance for the year as a whole will be a distinct improvement on 1977, wiping out losses carried forward.

By 1979 or 1980 the company expects to break even at least in the oil sector — and to do so by virtue of its own efforts.

(Münchner Merkur, 22 June 1978)

■ CENTREPIECE

How to impose stability on the money market

The declining power of the dollar is a matter of great concern for German industry and business and the subject of heated debate in financial circles. Here Hermann J. Abs, at 77 the doyen of German bankers, gives his pointed opinions to an audience of Düsseldorf bankers.

In March 1961 the mark was first revalued against the dollar, and I was as little in favour of the idea as I am now.

Revaluation may help to defend the dollar on international foreign exchange markets but it is based on an overestimation of our prowess, I still feel.

All measures through swaps and credits – and thus with borrowed ammunition – that have been introduced in defence of the dollar go far beyond the potential of a single country (and still do).

Ludwig Erhard, who untertook the revaluation, later said he considered the March 1961 revaluation wrong after all.

Of course Konrad Adenauer never admitted that the deutschemark was revalued at all, saying: "I don't know what you're talking about. We haven't revalued the deutschemark. We have merely devalued the dollar."

It has been said that the Americans have deliberately encouraged dollar devaluation. This is patently untrue.

US convertible foreign exchange reserves amounted to $16,000 on 1 December 1977. This was the entire foreign exchange which America could use as ammunition without resorting to the IMF, the Stabilisation Fund or its gold reserves.

At the end of February 1978, this figure stood at $18,000m. and is down to $10,000m today.

If, as has been said, the United States had wanted to reduce the dollar exchange rate by selling dollars and buying hard currency on international markets, this would have to be reflected in foreign exchange reserves. And this is not the case.

Therefore my first thesis is: the dollar exchange rate has not been deliberately reduced by manipulation. But it is another question whether the Americans are as conscious of the dollar exchange rate as those who possess dollars and must calculate in their own currencies. The answer is a clear no.

Of course, an American lives in the dollar area and spends dollars, and when a person thinks and operates only in terms of his own currency, when all his costs and profits are in that currency then it is obvious that the development of the exchange rate on foreign markets takes longer to become a subject of debate at home.

The Bundesbank is the largest dollar-holder in the world – larger even than Saudi Arabia.

We have more than $26,000m. of this unsurpassed currency. Cumulatively, the exchange rate fluctuations since 1961 have cost us about DM40,000m.

The amount as of 1 January 1978 (carried forward from last year) was DM6,500m. The rest has been offset by interest on dollar investments – primarily in America.

When I mention figures I do so from memory, but accurately.

Referring to special drawing rights, Herr Abs said:

They are ersatz gold of which, modifying an Esso advert, I once said: 'Put a Paper Tiger In Your Bank.' Drawing rights are an artificial paper, an obligation of course, but without being marketable and negotiable.

These special drawing rights – I hope I am not being too lengthy, but these are things one reads about everywhere – are a cocktail made up of 16 currencies, resulting from an agreement in 1974 by which drawing rights on the basis of the gold dollar were replaced.

The most important currency in this cocktail is the dollar with 33 per cent, followed by the deutschemark (we would never have dreamt that we would one day play such an exalted role) with 12.5 per cent and a number of other currencies with 7.5 per cent and less.

Since the new agreement two currencies have been eliminated from the basket. The key to this club is a world trade participation of one per cent or more. The currencies dropped have been the Danish krone and the South African rand (in the latter case for political reasons).

They have been replaced by the Iranian and Saudi Arabian rials – though, in my view, not without reservations because, albeit very rich regarding oil revenues, these two countries have very high inflation rates (between 20 and 30 per cent) and are therefore not exactly ideal currencies for a monetary fund.

How many dollars are there outside the United States? Estimates vary, the lowest being $460,000m., so let us say $500,000m. This figure contains a goodly portion of inter-bank deals and the cash is generally not freely available.

Some of these dollars have been invested in America and others are claims due from Third World countries relating to credits – claims that cannot be readily turned into cash and goods in view of the dubious creditwothiness of these countries.

This is an interesting subject for the North-South dialogue, and I hope and pray that those responsible don't get the idea that they can restore the creditworthiness of the borrowers by waiving debts. This would be deadly and the end of creditworthiness.

You just have to look back at my efforts on behalf of Germany's creditworthiness, which was rehabilitated; or the rehabilitation of Indonesia's finances without waiving a single dollar's worth of debts.

If similar rehabilitation plans were to be contemplated within the North-South dialogue it would be necessary to ask experienced people for advice, and this is most unlikely to happen.

Some people are already venturing forecasts on the development of the dollar parity, among them prominent German politicians.

Throughout my 58-year banking career – I was a foreign exchange dealer in London and Amsterdam between 1922 and 1924 – I have never yet made an exchange rate forecast. If I could forecast exchange rates I would certainly not have embarked on a job that entails a great deal of hard work.

It is doubtful, I believe, whether floating is a suitable method of preserving the substance. Some experts who, though familiar with these things, do not bear day-to-day responsibility are more or less agreed on this point.

We must ask ourselves time and again: Is it right that there should be fixed standards for measures of capacity, weight and length while there are no such standards in the relations between lender and borrower?

Why could floating not work? Because the ratio of worldwide capital transactions (short, medium and long-term) and world trade is 92 to eight, according to US statistics, which are more accurate than ours but from which Americans are learning as little as other nations.

I mentioned earlier that, cumulatively, we have lost about DM40,000m. as a result of exchange rate fluctuations, which once induced a member of the Central Bank Council to express doubts as to the Bundesbank's solvency. He resigned shortly thereafter.

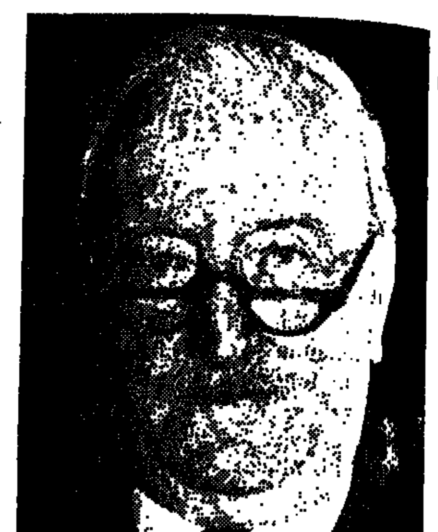
What can Europe do? I believe in the Snake. Milton Friedman once said: "It is unbelievable that the Snake exists considering the position of the deutschemark, since it is an imposition to expect the taxpayer to bear such losses."

So far, the taxpayer has lost nothing in connection with the Snake because all intervention took place in good time and was covered by all participants, including Denmark.

I feel the Snake has proved itself and would welcome it if France were to join for the third time. I would also like to see Britain, whose balance of payments has improved and whose inflation rate is down to single figures, back in the Snake.

The Snake would provide an instrument that guarantees more stability in monetary relations – not parities, which no longer exist – than we have today.

(Handelsblatt, 23 June 1978)



Hermann J. Abs, grand old man of German banking: still thinking hard about money (Photo: Sven Simon)

Watchdog role maintained

Münchner Merkur

Mergers continue unabated. In its annual report for 1977 the Federal Monopolies Commission, Berlin, records 554 mergers, as against 453 in 1976. In the first five months of 1978 there were 213 mergers, and in 84 per cent of cases the buying company had a turnover in excess of DM1,000 million.

Monopolies Commission President Wolfgang Kartte says "purchases in series pose a major problem for free competition."

This development can considerably aggravate the position of medium-sized companies and lead to undesirable follow-up mergers, as in the fuel, construction materials, tyres, glass, banking, transport and brewery sectors.

Since the introduction of merger controls in 1973, 16 mergers have been turned down. The mere existence of a control instrument has obvious preventive effects.

The number of mergers that were abandoned following examination by the commission is considerably larger than the number of actual bans.

Despite the merger wave, Herr Kartte remains optimistic, saying that the free-market economy cannot be destroyed even though many are sawing away at it.

The planned purchase of a 25-per-cent stake in Ruhrgas AG by BP was termed a "tough nut" by Herr Kartte.

But he stresses that his department has not yet formed a definite opinion on the deal although one might well wonder whether major gas companies ought to be purchased by oil companies.

The proposed European man-made fibre cartel must be examined as to whether the agreement would really lead to reduced capacities rather than reduced production necessitated by the sales position.

Though European law has priority over German law, Europe has still not established a basis in law on this issue."

The Berlin commission would like to exercise more than just a watchdog function.

In order to facilitate the adjustment of small and medium-sized companies to changed economic conditions, the Berlin anti-trust watchdogs are now manning the barricades.

(Münchner Merkur, 27 June 1978)

■ TRANSPORT

Bonn looks to hovertrain for high speed railway

Transport Minister Kurt Gscheidle and Finance Minister Hans Matthöfer may be contemplating progressively more drastic ways of making the Bundesbahn, or Federal Railways, run at a profit.

But in another Bonn Ministry a hovertrain network by the end of the century seems an increasingly distinct possibility.

Transport planners at Volker Hauff's Ministry of Research and Technology are busy pencilling in permanent way from one end of Europe to the other.

They have visions of hovertrains linking Central Scotland with Marseilles and Hamburg with Rome, trains travelling the length and breadth of Europe at 400 to 500 kilometres an hour (250 to 312mph).

These services may still be a distant prospect and the track still no nearer reality than the drawing-board, but the hovertrain itself is anything but a science fiction fantasy.

German taxpayers have already financed DM 250m. in research and development. Prototypes on experimental sections of track have proved in practice that the hovertrain will hover.

It not only hovers, suspended by the forces of magnetism; it can also travel at speeds of up to 400 km/h (250mph). A decision has even been made as to the system on which further research is to be conducted.

Bonn has opted for the design submitted by the Munich aerospace company Messerschmitt-Bölkow-Blohm (MBB) and tank manufacturers Krauss Maffei, also of Munich.

But the second step is proving more problematic. The Minister reckons hovertrains are only feasible if adopted throughout Europe and had intended demonstrating the German hovertrain at next year's International Transport Fair in Hamburg.

A 900-metre trial section of hovertrack was to be built from the fairground to St Pauli and a prototype train to zoom impressively to and fro at 90km/h (60mph).

The Hamburg transport fair was to be a showcase of German hovertrain technology – one of the few really major innovations over the past decade.

But a court order has put a spoke in the wheel. A medical practitioner lodged a legal protest against the project, claiming that his peace and quiet would be unwarrantably disturbed during the three weeks the hovertrain was to be in operation.

The court agreed and has postponed the beginning of construction work. The companies associated with the project are hoping that a higher court will overrule the initial judgment.

If need be the Bonn Research Ministry is even considering building a mere 600 metres of track, along which the prototype hovertrain could reach a speed of 70 km/h (40mph).

The 16-ton prototype Siemens hovertrain in action at the company's Nuremberg proving-ground. It cruises at 300km/h (188mph) and reaches a top speed of 500km/h (300mph). Bonn is backing the hovertrain project, with which AEG and BBC are also associated. (Photo: dpa)

But this setback has not disheartened the planners. The go-ahead has now been given for a large-scale pilot project near Emden in an area where there is not much industry and fewer people live. Work on a 22.4-kilometre (14-mile) section of hovertrack is to begin later this year. By 1982 expenditure totalling DM 140m. and payable by Bonn will have mounted up.

Some of the country's foremost industrial enterprises are associated with the project. The consortium includes names such as MBB, Krauss Maffei, Thyssen, Siemens, BBC, AEG and Dyckerhoff & Widmann.

Research Minister Hauff even envisages running a first commercial hovertrain service between Cologne-Bonn airport and Düsseldorf.

Pundits expect the large-scale trials to supply detailed information about safety, reliability and availability of the new system, about its comfort, environmental acceptability, energy consumption and cost.

Most experts now agree that in theory the hovertrain has undeniable advantages over other modes of transport. But little more than estimates are available as to what it will cost.

Scientific advisers to the Research Ministry are convinced that rail travel can only compete with the private car provided speed and comfort are improved. The private car has drawbacks: more than a million traffic accidents a year, atmospheric pollution, water and soil pollution, noise, almost total dependence on oil-based fuel and rush-hour congestion and traffic chaos.

Yet no-one is personally going to forgo the advantages of the private car, the experts argue, whereas exactly the opposite applies to the railways. Everyone approves of them but not many people use them.

In 1950 rail travel still accounted for 18 per cent of passenger traffic. By 1960 it was only eight per cent and by 1976 only three-and-a-half.

Between 1960 and 1976 the private car's share of passenger traffic increased from 58 to 74 per cent.

Transport specialists reckon the hovertrain will use much less energy and prove far more satisfactory from the pollution viewpoint than other modes of transport.

At speeds of, say, 100 km/h (60mph) the primary energy consumption of conventional railways amounts to between 30 and 40 grams of coal equivalent per passenger kilometre.

The comparable figure for a private car travelling at this speed is twice as high, whereas the hovertrain can travel at 300km/h (188mph) on this fuel consumption.

Hovertrains are powered by electricity, so they do not directly cause environmental pollution, but the power still has to be generated, of course, so the power station must be borne in mind.

Still, the hovertrain does not touch its track, so it is the quietest and smoothest-running mode of transport imaginable.

At 100km/h conventional railway trains create a noise of 80 perceived noise decibels, or roughly the same as a busy autobahn.

The only noise the hovertrain makes is the whoosh of wind resistance, and it will not reach 90 decibels, the level at which soundproofing is advisable in built-up areas, until it travels at top speed: 400km/h (250mph).

Cost is nonetheless the crucial factor. It alone will, in the final analysis, decide whether the hovertrain proves a success or a failure.

If the hovertrain is to be competitive the cost per passenger kilometre must not exceed 17 pfennigs at 1976 prices, it is estimated.

The Bundesbahn currently charges 13 pfennigs per kilometre in second class and 21 pfennigs in first class. Motorists as a rule merely estimate the fuel cost of roughly ten pfennigs per kilometre.

Past estimates have not held forth much prospect of the hovertrain keeping to within these limits, but pundits are no longer so sure.

Hovertrack should work out less expensive to build than the permanent way for advanced passenger transport and high-speed rail schemes.

Depending on the system the cost per kilometre of hovertrack should range from 14 to 18 million marks. It should prove less expensive to run than a conventional railroad too.

Automation will cut manpower costs. On the Hamburg-Munich run staff need not exceed 1,000 and on no account will more than 5,000 men be needed.

Comparable manpower cuts are anticipated on new routes planned by the Bundesbahn, which reckons 50 men will be able to run a section of track for which 300 used to be required.

Lastly, the hovertrain's turn-round time will make it easier to adapt to fluctuations in demand, so it will need substantially less capacity than the present railway service.

Wolfgang Mauersberg

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 24 June 1978)

THE ARTS

Bergman directs Chekhov in Munich

Swedish film director Ingmar Bergman is now directing Chekhov's Three Sisters at the Residenztheater in Munich.

Two years ago when Bergman was awarded the Goethe Prize in Frankfurt, he told of a dream in which an old Mexican poet told him at the gate of Goethe's garden: "The true artist speaks to the human heart."

Bergman then moved to Munich where he made the film Snake's Egg and then Autumn Sonata. He also directed Strindberg's Dream Play at the Residenztheater, the first time he had directed for the theatre in Germany.

The choice of this company to put on the Dream Play was surprising, as they have been the despair of many a good director. The production turned out to be a disaster. The forced and overdone acting concealed rather than revealed what was going on in the hearts of the characters.

Undaunted, Bergman decided to do the Chekhov play with the same ensemble, with the result that rehearsals took far longer than usual. Three-and-a-half months are far longer than most directors are allowed to rehearse a play.

But characters in the Chekhov play reveal their hearts on the stage of the Munich Residenztheater.

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The faces show sadness or boredom, the voices are tired or wise with age, the movements are slow and undecisive, the light is dull and diffuse, shining on rotten leaves and bare walls.

Yet there are few plays so dramatic and full of contradictions as Chekhov's Three Sisters. (The translation here is a modern, fast-moving version by Peter Urban.)

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The performance given at the Residenztheater clearly makes the point that this world of unsatisfied yearnings is that of the calm before the storm. But this calm is leaden and soporific. There is nothing in it to suggest the influence of Gorki.

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The performance is clean and sterile. It is static and monotonous, even in its few lighter moments. It is too pregnant with significance and despair where Chekhov's original is full of spiritual dynamism, movement and colour.

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Christine Büchegger, who plays the youngest of the three sisters, always manages to regain her balance after starting something new or giving up something she has just started.

In the case of Christina Ostermayer, who plays the second sister, we at least get a somewhat more resolute expression of her unhappy life and a convincing breakdown.

Gaby Dohm, as the uneducated sister-in-law, is allowed to appear in gaudy costumes and is lively, coarse and at times even vulgar.

Kurt Meisel plays her husband, a scientist doomed to obscurity in the provinces. We see him pushing a pram with an open book on top of it.

For the last scene, Bergman who for the most part sticks closely to the original, transforms two tramps quietly playing harp and violin in the background into two jugglers in motley. They are symbolically present as in many of his films. Perhaps they stood for the transitoriness of an old-fashioned world. In the previous scene a pile of furniture could have been reminiscent of the fate of Lorca's Dona Rosita — life withering away uselessly. The first-nighters applauded long, loud, solemnly and enthusiastically.

Dietmar N. Schmidt
(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 24 June 1978)

Farmer seen as others see him

The German Folk Museum in Berlin is now holding an exhibition on the Image of the Farmer. This exhaustive exhibition contains innumerable written documents, paintings, costumes and implements and provides a kind of genealogy of the image of the farmer.

If you ask the man in the street what he associates with the word farmer he will very probably reply: peace, nature, quiet, clean air, freedom, the soil, *independence.*

This picture of the farmer has been faithfully and perseveringly painted throughout the centuries. School textbooks of our day still have the farmer tread behind his horse as it ploughs the furrow and smoke his meerschaum pipe in the evenings in front of his little house. Even German folklorists have contributed to this image of the farmer, against their better judgement.

A small example may serve to show how unrealistic the details of the image of the farmer often are. For centuries farmers' and peasants' costumes have been carefully collected and preserved as evidence of the farmer's specific situation and tradition.

The Berlin exhibition allows little

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This Dürer watercolour, The Rock of Doss Trento, is a Hirsch collection item bought at Sotheby's on a German museum's behalf for DM2.6m.

German museums pay high prices at London auction

The Berlin State Museums bought a mediaeval medaillion at the Hirsch auction at Sotheby's in London recently for 4.8 million deutschemarks.

The pendant to this medallion, which depicts mercy in the form of an angel, is in the Frankfurt Museum Of Arts and Crafts and was probably made by Flemish goldsmith Godefroid de Claire. It has a diameter of just under 14 centimetres.

The 4.8 million deutschemarks paid for the pendant is the highest price ever paid for an objet d'art (paintings excepted). *It was the most sensational sale at* the six-day auction. When the bids went over the million-pound mark, those present held their breath.

Shortly before this, the previous record price for a single work of art had been broken. An enamelled plaque which was probably used as an ornament on arms changed hands for just under DM4.4 million. This plaque depicts the crucifixion on a gilt copper background and is probably also by Godefroid de Claire.

This piece is said to come from the Emperor Friedrich Barbarossa's coronation jewellery which the emperor is reputd to have given to a Russian prince in 1165. It was in the Leningrad Eremitage before Robert von Hirsch bought it.

Prices paid for the Hirsch art treasures have surpassed all expectations. The estimated value of the Hirsch collection, reckoned to be the most valuable in the world, was DM25 million before the auction started.

On the first two days of the auction drawings, miniatures, water colours and oil paintings sold for DM16 million. Sotheby's managing director Peter Wilson is reckoning on a total turnover of about 47.5 million deutschemarks.

It is not known who will receive the proceeds of this sale but it is widely assumed that they will go to Robert Hirsch's relatives in various parts of the world. Von Hirsch died in *Basle* last year at the age of 94.

Wilson said that in three years at the latest the prices paid for works at this auction would be considered quite reasonable, but many of the purchases are pure speculation.

Many people expect that the art museum in Malibu, California, founded by multi-millionaire Paul Getty will soon be figuring as a big buyer on the international art markets.

Disputes about the inheritance have been partially settled at least and it is reckoned that the Getty museum will have DM40 million a year to spend on works of art.

The grand old man of German banking, Hermann Abs, attended the London auction. Asked why, he said "out of curiosity." He turned out to be representing a consortium of German museums at Sotheby's.

(Münchner Merkur, 23 June 1978)

Enamel medallion depicting angel of mercy, 1150, by Flemish goldsmith Godefroid de Claire, bought at Sotheby's for record DM 4.8m. on behalf of a West Berlin museum (left); armplate depicting Crucifixion, 1165, reputedly one of Emperor Barbarossa's crown jewels, bought on behalf of Nuremberg museum at London auction for DM4.4m. (Photos: dpa)

CULTURE

Catalonian festival in Berlin

The catalonian festival now on in West Berlin is the first time that a national minority, as opposed to a country, has been given the chance to present its culture.

The public has the opportunity to find out about the specific Catalonian culture with its own language, literature, music, art and architecture.

Most art lovers have heard of the painters Miró and Dali, and perhaps also of the eccentric architect Gaudi, and they probably classify all three as Spanish artists. But this ignores a major element in their work — its "Catalinity". Gaudi's work for instance cannot be understood out of the context of *Modernismo,* a variation of pre-Raphaelism which had no counterpart in the rest of Spain, and of Catalonian folk art, especially ceramics.

Millions of Germans have spent their holidays in Catalonia, on the Costa Brava, the Balearic Islands or in Alicante without realising that they are in a area whose history and present day reality cannot simply be described as Spanish.

Francoist policies and ideologies up to about two years ago did their best to blur national differences by means of widespread political repression and the slogan of "a great and free nation." After the Spanish Civil War, for example, the use of the Catalan language was forbidden by decree and punished by heavy *fines.* Later a more subtle method was adopted. The Catalan language (which is just as old and has just as long a written tradition as the Castilian national tongue) was described in school textbooks and popular books on language as a Spanish dialect.

The idea was to achieve a change of consciousness among those who spoke the language. This tactic proved unsuccessful as the example of Xirinacs, a member of the Cortes, shows. He was sentenced to several terms of imprisonment for refusing to speak Spanish on public occasions.

The majority of Spaniards in the post civil war era regarded Catalonia as a Spanish province with its own dialect; its folklore, a high level of tourism and a heavy concentration of industry. Not until the liberalisation which followed Franco's death and the 1977 parliamentary elections, in which the Catalonian left-wing parties won hands down, did the public become aware that the Catalans were determined to achieve cultural and political autonomy.

The Catalans have made tremendous efforts to achieve this. The most recent and spectacular manifestation of this determination was on 11 September 1977 (the Catalonian national day of celebration commemorating resistance to centralisation by the Madrid Bourbons in 1714). One-and-a-half million people demonstrated in the streets of Barcelona for Catalonian autonomy.

The golden age of Catalonia was during the Middle Ages when Catalonia and Aragon formed an independent confederation and the kings of Aragon came from the House of the Count of Barcelona. In the 13th and 14th centuries this confederation dominated the western mediterranean area and the Iberian Peninsula and enjoyed the highest level of economic prosperity in the entire region.

Then there were the Catalonian kingdoms of Valencia and Mallorca, each with its own court but which formed an ethnic and cultural unit long after the dissolution of the confederation and its inclusion in Aragon-Castile (1494).

The name Catalonia and the adjective Catalan in particular have several meanings because of the historical factors sketched. In a narrow sense, the word describes the region from the French border (the Pyrenees to Andorra) down to the Ebro, south of Tarragonna: the former mediaeval principality of which Barcelona was the centre.

In a wider sense, it includes the entire area in which Catalan is spoken, including the French department of Pyrenees Oriental around Perpignan and along the Mediterranean coast to the south of Alicante, including the Balearics and Ibiza and a small enclave on Sardinal. Catalan is even the official language of the princedom of Andorra.

The Paisos Catalans consist of 70,000 square kilometres. The number of Catalans is between seven and eight millions. (Not all the population of this area is a Catalan origin, especially as Barcelona has a large number of workers from southern Spain).

All the Paisos Catalans are represented in this exhibition, although there is a strong empahsis on Barcelona as the cultural and economic metropole. The Catalan language and the common history are the two main unifying factors for Catalans today.

The language plays an important part in the Catalan festival. Several events are devoted to Catalan writers. A book exhibition in the Ibero-American Institute demonstrates the astonishingly high productivity of Catalan publishers who have doubled the number of works published annually in the language to 1000. Catalan linguists, often lawyers and members of other professions who have become socio-linguists out of their commitment to the language, have made a significant contribution to the rehabilitation of the language. They have described how Catalan survived in all sections of the population so that even workers from the south of Spain have, to a large extent, become "Catalanised."

The Free University of Berlin is holding a day of talks and lectures on Catalan sociolinguistics in which Catalan linguists will discuss the connections between language and society and language and politics, illustrating their arguments from their experience.

The new song and chanson movement known as *Nova Canco* played an important part in the resurgence of Catalan. It began at the end of the 1950s when the language was allowed to be used in the press and on rdio. It soon became immensely popular despite the far from favourable conditions. Singing in Catalan was an act of resistance and understood as such. The *Nova Canco* soon moved away from the expression of individual and personal feelings and became a vehicle for social criticism and protest. The main *Nova Canco* singers will be performing in Berlin.

Christine Bierbach
(Der Tagesspiegel, 23 June 1978)

Author Günter Grass comes off the stage and meets his audience at the Berlin International Literature Festival. Grass was one of 50 writers who took part in the event. (Photo: Ludwig Binder)

Continued from page 10

space for such speculations. It proves that the majority of farmers did not have their own home-made costumes but bought their clothes in town and followed the fashions of the times.

The idyllic view of country life goes back to the 17th century and reached its height with the romantics in the 19the century.

During the middle ages the image of the farmer was far less idyllic. Few people realise today that the Church in all seriousness blamed farmers and peasants for original sin.

And their social status corresponded to this stigma although one may well ask whether it was not the other way round and peasants were stigmatised in this way precisely because of their lowly status.

Apart from this idyllic and unrealistic image, there has always been another side to the transfiguration of the peasant — the belief that the peasant was stupid, worthless and behind the times. There are plenty of paintings and writings about the country bumpkin to confirm this image.

This image was a false one even in the 16th century when there was, admittedly, a higher level of eduction in the town but this by no means meant that the peasants were mainly illiterate. Huge efforts were being made in education even this early.

The series of misjudgements of the peasant is also associated with the increasing identity crisis of the town. It was once believed that the air of the town made one free.

Lothar Schmidt-Mühlisch
(Die Welt, 23 June 1978)

Literature in the Big Top

The Berlin International Literature Festival (BILT 78) and the Catalonian festival are the two highlights of the Berlin cultural scene between the Berlin Film Festival and the city's festival week.

The idea of making literature accessible to a wider public is a fine and social one. The plan here was to bring literature into the circus, for example. "We have invited 50 of the most respected writers in the world, men and women of different generations, temperament and origin, to take part," say the four institutions which have organised the events.

The BILT tent, rented from the travelling Aramant Circus, went up in Kreuzberg. (Here we find the world's only artistic cow and a pig quartet. There are also hares, dogs, geese and of course elephants, lamas, horses, 32 animals in all). Just when everything was set, the row started — between the local corporation and the people who live in the Mariannenplatz and the Bethanien Artists' House.

The local corporation wants to build an outdoor stage on the Mariannenplatz, which means the local residents' will lose the last bit of green in the area. At the beginning of BILT, young people handed out leaflets saying: "Kreuzberg to be made socially acceptable — only the people are in the way!"

Then there was the boycott. Round the tent, ear-splitting music blared. Young protesters occupied the stage, read the resolution, declared international poetry to be rubbish and presented Fuzzy, "a poet from our own ranks." Fuzzy read trivial pacifist poetry which the audience greeted with derision.

The protestors then poured powder from a fire extinguisher over the assembled literature fans. The Mangelsdorff Quintett sound system was not working, despite technical assistance. This meant that neither Robert Wolfgang Schnell nor Günter Grass, both experienced in dealing with this kind of thing, were able to establish contact between the literati and those opposed to the local corporation plan.

It was a tragic misunderstanding. Literature was decried by some of those to whom it was addressed as something coming from the state and intended for "better circles." And on the other hand, the writers could not make the point that they felt solidarity with the protestors. And all because of the sound system.

The event in the circus tent was called off and moved to the Academy of Arts. Here the literati were "in the aquarium," as Günter Grass put it in his disappointment. Grass read 12 poems from his novel *Der Butt,* generalisations of personal experience or pesonalisations of general experience. At any rate, they were too long. Johannes Schenk read a resolution on behalf of the imprisoned poet Peter Paul Zahl and others.

Schenk wisely confined himself to reading only three poems, in one of which he attacked "closely allied forms of alienation," Judith Herberg from Holland, who spent part of the war in a concentration camp, read her poems, which were convincing if low key. Vim de Vries, who has worked in a pipe factory for 25 years, read plain committed poems, poems of an educated worker.

Jürgen Beckelmann
(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 26 June 1978)

■ THE ARTS

Bergman directs Chekhov in Munich

Swedish film director Ingmar Bergman is now directing Chekhov's Three Sisters at the Residenztheater in Munich.

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Gaby Dohm, as the uneducated sister-in-law, is allowed to appear in gaudy costumes and is lively, coarse and at times even vulgar.

Kurt Meisel plays her husband, a scientist doomed to obscurity in the provinces. We see him pushing a pram with an open book on top of it.

For the last scene, Bergman who for the most part sticks closely to the original, transforms two tramps quietly playing harp and violin in the background into two jugglers in motley. They are symbolically present as in many of his films. Perhaps they stood for the transitoriness of an old-fashioned world. In the previous scene a pile of furniture could have been reminiscent of the fate of Lorca's Dona Rosita — life withering away uselessly. The first-nighters applauded long, loud, solemnly and enthusiastically.

Dietmar N. Schmidt
(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 24 June 1978)

Farmer seen as others see him

The German Folk Museum in Berlin is now holding an exhibition on the Image of the Farmer. This exhaustive exhibition contains innumerable written documents, paintings, costumes and implements and provides a kind of genealogy of the image of the farmer.

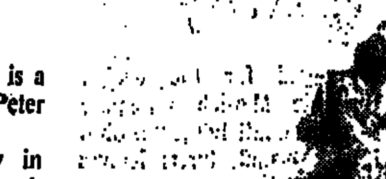
If you ask the man in the street what he associates with the word farmer he will very probably reply: peace, nature, quiet, clean air, freedom, the soil, independence.

This picture of the farmer has been faithfully and perseveringly painted throughout the centuries. School textbooks of our day still have the farmer tread behind his horse as it ploughs the furrow and smoke his meerschaum pipe in the evenings in front of his little house. Even German folklorists have contributed to this image of the farmer, against their better judgement.

A small example may serve to show how unrealistic the details of the image of the farmer often are. For centuries farmers' and peasants' costumes have been carefully collected and preserved as evidence of the farmer's specific situation and tradition.

The Berlin exhibition allows little

Continued on page 11



This Dürer watercolour, The Rock of Doss Trento, is a Hirsch collection item bought at Sotheby's on a German museum's behalf for DM2.5m.

German museums pay high prices at London auction

The Berlin State Museums bought a mediaeval medaillion at the Hirsch auction at Sotheby's in London recently for 4.8 million deutschemarks.

The pendant to this medallion, which depicts mercy in the form of an angel, is in the Frankfurt Museum Of Arts and Crafts and was probably made by Flemish goldsmith Godefroid de Claire. It has a diameter of just under 14 centimetres.

The 4.8 million deutschemarks paid for the pendant is the highest price ever paid for an objet d'art (paintings excepted). *It was the most sensational sale at* the six-day auction. When the bids went over the million-pound mark, those present held their breath.

Shortly before this, the previous record price for a single work of art had been broken. An enamelled plaque which was probably used as an ornament on arms changed hands for just under DM4.4 million. This plaque depicts the crucifixion on a gilt copper background and is probably also by Godefroid de Claire.

This piece is said to come from the Emperor Friedrich Barbarossa's coronation jewellery which the emperor is reputd to have given to a Russian prince in 1165. It was in the Leningrad Eremitage before Robert von Hirsch bought it.

Prices paid for the Hirsch art treasures have surpassed all expectations. The estimated value of the Hirsch collection, reckoned to be the most valuable in the world, was DM25 million before the auction started.

On the first two days of the auction, drawings, miniatures, water colours and oil paintings sold for DM16 million. Sotheby's managing director Peter Wilson is reckoning on a total turnover of about 47.5 million deutschemarks.

It is not known who will receive the proceeds of this sale but it is widely assumed that they will go to Robert von Hirsch's relatives in various parts of the world. Von Hirsch died in Basle last year at the age of 94.

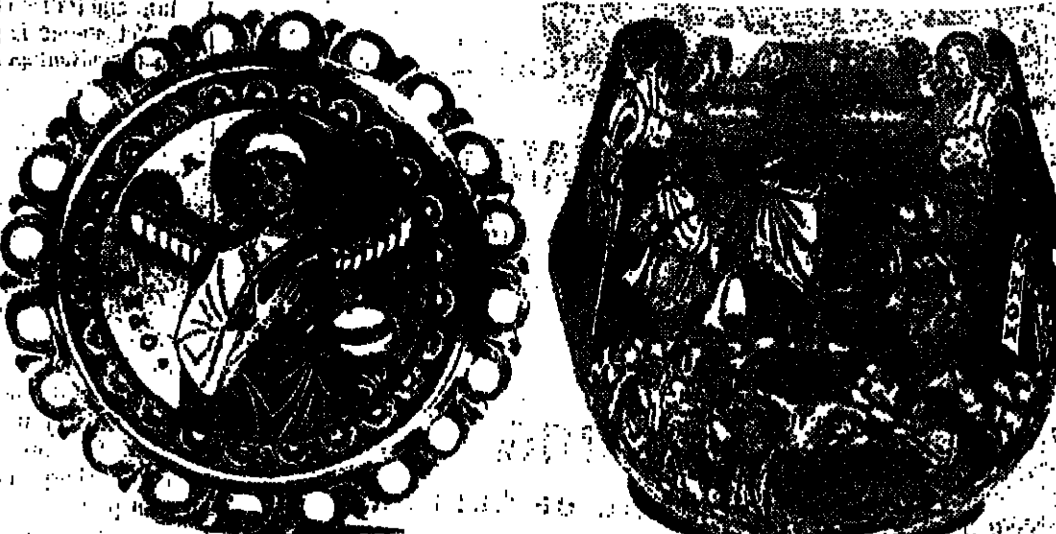
Wilson said that in three years at the latest the prices paid for works at this auction would be considered quite reasonable, but many of the purchases are pure speculation.

Many people expect that the art museum in Malibu, California, founded by multi-millionaire Paul Getty will soon be figuring as a big buyer on the international art markets.

Disputes about the inheritance have been partially settled at least and it is reckoned that the Getty museum will have DM40 million a year to spend on works of art.

The grand old man of German banking, Hermann Abs, attended the London auction. Asked why, he said "out of curiosity." He turned out to be representing a consortium of German museums at Sotheby's.

(Münchner Merkur, 23 June 1978)





Enamel medallion depicting angel of mercy, 1150, by Flemish goldsmith Godefroid de Claire, bought at Sotheby's for record DM 4.8m. on behalf of a West Berlin museum (left); armplate depicting Crucifixion, 1165, reputedly one of Emperor Barbarossa's crown jewels, bought on behalf of Nuremberg museum at London auction for DM4.4m. (Photos: dpa)

■ CULTURE

Catalonian festival in Berlin

The catalonian festival now on in West Berlin is the first time that a national minority, as opposed to a country, has been given the chance to present its culture.

The public has the opportunity to find out about the specific Catalonian culture with its own language, literature, music, art and architecture.

Most art lovers have heard of the painters Miró and Dali, and perhaps also of the eccentric architect Gaudi, and they probably classify all three as Spanish artists. But this ignores a major element in their work — its "Catalinity". Gaudi's work for instance cannot be understood out of the context of *Modernismo*, a variation of pre-Raphaelism which had no counterpart in the rest of Spain, and of Catalonian folk art, especially ceramics.

Millions of Germans have spent their holidays in Catalonia, on the Costa Brava, the Balearic Islands or in Alicante without realising that they are in a area whose history and present day reality cannot simply be described as Spanish.

Francoist policies and ideologies up to about two years ago did their best to blur national differences by means of widespread political repression and the slogan of "a great and free nation." After the Spanish Civil War, for example, the use of the Catalan language was forbidden by decree and punished by heavy fines. Later a more subtle method was adopted. The Catalan language (which is just as old and has just as long a written tradition as the Castilian national tongue) was described in school textbooks and popular books on language as a Spanish dialect.

The idea was to achieve a change of consciousness among those who spoke the language. This tactic proved unsuccessful as the example of Xirinacs, a member of the Cortes, shows. He was sentenced to several terms of imprisonment for refusing to speak Spanish on public occasions.

The majority of Spaniards in the post civil war era regarded Catalonia as a Spanish province with its own dialect, its folklore, a high level of tourism and a heavy concentration of industry. Not until the liberalisation which followed



Author Günter Grass comes off the stage and meets his audience at the Berlin International Literature Festival. Grass was one of 50 writers who took part in the event. (Photo: Ludwig Binder)

Franco's death and the 1977 parliamentary elections, in which the Catalonian left-wing parties won hands down, did the public become aware that the Catalans were determined to achieve cultural and political autonomy.

The Catalans have made tremendous efforts to achieve this. The most recent and spectacular manifestation of this determination was on 11 September 1977 (the Catalonian national day of celebration commemorating resistance to centralisation by the Madrid Bourbons in 1714). One-and-a-half million people demonstrated in the streets of Barcelona for Catalonian autonomy.

The golden age of Catalonia was during the Middle Ages when Catalonia and Aragon formed an independent confederation and the kings of Aragon came from the House of the Count of Barcelona. In the 13th and 14th centuries this confederation dominated the western mediterranean area and the Iberian Peninsula and enjoyed the highest level of economic prosperity in the entire region.

Then there were the Catalonian kingdoms of Valencia and Mallorca, each with its own court but which formed an ethnic and cultural unit long after the dissolution of the confederation and its inclusion in Aragon-Castile (1494).

The name Catalonia and the adjective Catalan in particular have several meanings because of the historical factors sketched. In a narrow sense, the word describes the region from the French border (the Pyrenees to Andorra) down to the Ebro, south of Tarragonna: the former mediaeval principality of which Barcelona was the centre.

In a wider sense, it includes the entire area in which Catalan is spoken, including the French department of Pyrenees Oriental around Perpignan and along the Mediterranean coast to the south of Alicante, including the Balearics and Ibiza and a small enclave on Sardinal. Catalan is even the official language of the princedom of Andorra.

The Paisos Catalans consist of 70,000 square kilometres. The number of Catalans is between seven and eight millions. (Not all the population of this area is a Catalan origin, especially as Barcelona has a large number of workers from southern Spain).

All the Paisos Catalans are represented in this exhibition, although there is a strong empahsis on Barcelona as the cultural and economic metropole. The Catalan language and the common history are the two main unifying factors for Catalans today.

The language plays an important part in the Catalan festival. Several events are devoted to Catalan writers. A book exhibition in the Ibero-American Institute demonstrates the astonishingly high productivity of Catalan publishers who have doubled the number of works published annually in the language to 1000. Catalan linguists, often lawyers and members of other professions who have become socio-linguists out of their commitment to the language, have made a significant contribution to the rehabilitation of the language. They have described how Catalan survived in all sections of the population so that even workers from the south of Spain have, to a large extent, become "Catalanised."

The Free University of Berlin is holding a day of talks and lectures on Catalan sociolinguistics in which Catalan linguists will discuss the connections between language and society and language and politics, illustrating their arguments from their experience.

The new song and chanson movement known as *Nova Canco* played an important part in the resurgence of Catalan. It began at the end of the 1950s when the language was allowed to be used in the press and on rdio. It soon became immensely popular despite the far from favourable conditions. Singing in Catalan was an act of resistance and understood as such. The *Nova Canco* soon moved away from the expression of individual and personal feelings and became a vehicle for social criticism and protest. The main *Nova Canco* singers will be performing in Berlin.

Christine Bierbach
(Der Tagesspiegel, 23 June 1978)

Literature in the Big Top

The Berlin International Literature Festival (BILT 78) and the Catalonian festival are the two highlights of the Berlin cultural scene between the Berlin Film Festival and the city's festival week.

The idea of making literature accessible to a wider public is a fine and social one. The plan here was to bring literature into the circus, for example. "We have invited 50 of the most respected writers in the world, men and women of different generations, temperament and origin, to take part," say the four institutions which have organised the events.

The BILT tent, rented from the travelling Aramant Circus, went up in Kreuzberg. (Here we find the world's only artistic cow and a pig quartet. There are also hares, dogs, geese and of course elephants, lamas, horses, 32 animals in all). Just when everything was set, the row started — between the local corporation and the people who live in the Mariannenplatz and the Bethanien Artists' House.

The local corporation wants to build an outdoor stage on the Mariannenplatz, which means the local residents' will lose the last bit of green in the area. At the beginning of BILT, young people handed out leaflets saying: "Kreuzberg to be made socially acceptable — only the people are in the way!"

Then there was the boycott. Round the tent, ear-splitting music blared. Young protesters occupied the stage, read the resolution, declared international poetry to be rubbish and presented Fuzzy, "a poet from our own ranks." Fuzzy read trivial pacifist poetry which the audience greeted with derision.

The protestors then poured powder from a fire extinguisher over the assembled literature fans. The Mangelsdorff Quintett sound system was not working, despite technical assistance. This meant that neither Robert Wolfgang Schnell nor Günter Grass, both experienced in dealing with this kind of thing, were able to establish contact between the literati and those opposed to the local corporation plan.

It was a tragic misunderstanding. Literature was decried by some of those to whom it was addressed as something coming from the state and intended for "better circles." And on the other hand, the writers could not make the point that they felt solidarity with the protestors. And all because of the sound system.

The event in the circus tent was called off and moved to the Academy of Arts. Here the literati were "in the aquarium," as Günter Grass put it in his disappointment. Grass read 12 poems from his novel *Der Butt*, generalisations of personal experience or pesonalisations of general experience. At any rate, they were too long. Johannes Schenk read a resolution on behalf of the imprisoned poet Peter Paul Zahl and others.

Schenk wisely confined himself to reading only three poems, in one of which he attacked "closely allied forms of alienation." Judith Herberg from Holland, who spent part of the war in a concentration camp, read her poems, which were convincing if low key. Vim de Vries, who has worked in a pipe factory for 25 years, read plain committed poems, poems of an educated worker.

Jürgen Beckelmann
(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 26 June 1978)

Continued from page 10

space for such speculations. It proves that the majority of farmers did not have their own home-made costumes but bought their clothes in town and followed the fashions of the times.

The idyllic view of country life goes back to the 17th century and reached its height with the romantics in the 19the century.

During the middle ages the image of the farmer was far less idyllic. Few people realise today that the Church in all seriousness blamed farmers and peasants for original sin.

And their social status corresponded to this stigma although one may well ask whether it was not the other way round and peasants were stigmatised in this way precisely because of their lowly status.

Apart from this idyllic and unrealistic image, there has always been another side to the transfiguration of the peasant — the belief that the peasant was stupid, worthless and behind the times. There are plenty of paintings and writings about the country bumpkin to confirm this image.

This image was a false one even in the 16th century when there was, admittedly, a higher level of eduction in the town but this by no means meant that the peasants were mainly illiterate. Huge efforts were being made in education even this early.

The series of misjudgements of the peasant is also associated with the increasing identity crisis of the town. It was once believed that the air of the town made one free.

Lothar Schmidt-Mühlisch
(Die Welt, 23 June 1978)

■ HEALTH

Electronic oxygen probe saves lives at birth

Frankfurter Rundschau

An electronic oxygen probe the size of a button invented by doctors Albert and Renate Huch is about to conquer the medical world, an international symposium of obstetricians in Marburg was told.

Attached to the scalp of an unborn baby, the electrode registers the oxygen molecules exuded through the infant's skin. The probe automatically shows when the infant needs more oxygen or when an immediate stop in the delivery process is needed.

The oxygen watchdog thus helps an early diagnosis of possible birth complications. The symposium was told that the device can greatly reduce the risks of birth.

When the uterus contracts in labour, the baby's oxygen supply, provided from the placenta via the umbilical cord, is virtually cut off. The danger of oxygen shortage makes birth the most dangerous hour in man's life.

The Marburg Obstetrics Clinic has monitored all new-born babies since late 1973 – about 2,000 a year – with the new miracle electrode.

Dr Renate Huch told the symposium that the device saved about five infants a year from mental and physical damage caused by inadequate oxygen supply.

The electrode has also proved particularly beneficial in monitoring incubator babies, preventing an over-supply of oxygen.

Until a few years ago, pediatricians – especially in the United States – believed that new-born infants with underdeveloped lungs could be saved by enriching the air with oxygen.

Thousands of infants went blind as a result of this fallacy and many died of brain paralysis.

Today it is an established that an overdose of oxygen can be extremely dangerous for babies. Since it has hitherto been impossible to continuously monitor the concentration of oxygen in the incubator, infants are still subject to a cornea disease that can lead to blindness.

It is here that the Marburg oxygen probe becomes an electronic guardian angel. The probe has been recognised by leading obstetricians as a milestone in medical technology. It is hoped that *infant mortality – still relatively high in* West Germany – can be reduced considerably by its use.

In risk births, the usual procedure is to take frequent blood samples from the mother to test oxygen pressure. But this method of monitoring is not very reliable because labour pains change the rate of breathing and thus the oxygen pressure in the blood. Moreover, it is too time-consuming to permit the obstetrician to take the immediate countermeasures necessary.

The Marburg probe changes this. The small electrode is attached to the skin where the distance to the nearest blood vessel is relatively small. A tiny heat generator within the electrode brings the temperature within an area of the device no bigger than a pinhead to 43° centigrade. This temperature causes no pain while stimulating and controlling the blood supply to such an extent as to give an exactly acount of the epidermis, permitting reliable oxygen measurements.

The oxygen molecules exuded by the skin and the capillary blood vessels are then measured by the electrode's membrane.

This bloodless method causes no discomfort to the patient and permits continuous monitoring.

The electrode has been tested in many pediatric clinics. If mother and child are monitored simultaneously during delivery – the electrode can be attached to the head of the baby as soon as it becomes visible – the obstetrician can easily determine the exact moment at which more oxygen has to be provided or labour discontinued.

The new method has been instrumental in saving many lives and has also provided obstetricians with a number of interesting findings.

The Marburg obstetricians established, among other things, that even healthy infants are endangered by continuous screaming during their first days because *of the oxygen deficiency created.*

Another important aspect is that psychologically ill-prepared pregnant women are generally extremely tense during labour and do not breathe rhythmically between pains. This subconscious reaction endangers the baby.

The device has also been successfully used in general surgery, providing reliable information while the patient is under anaesthetic and during post-operative intensive care.

Monitoring of the oxygen supply tells the surgeon when the patient needs oxygen, reducing the risks of surgery.

Konrad Müller-Christiansen

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 24 June 1978)



Medicine safe

Child-proof medicine chest: some 28,000 German children suffer from accidental poisoning every year, almost half of them through getting their hands on pharmaceutical preparations in the home. Now the Medico-Safe, gold medal winner at the Basle industrial exhibition, offers parents an answer. Designed by Günter Schalitz, a 34-year-old Höxter insurance agent, it is said to defy all efforts to open it by tiny hands. The secret lies in the release catches: they must be pressed simultaneously and children's hands are not big enough to reach the four buttons. (Photo: dpa)

Kiss-of-life masks gift for drivers

Everybody in the Federal Republic of Germany can obtain a "kiss-of-life" mask from the German Automobile Association (ADAC) free of charge as ADAC's 75th anniversary gift to German motorists.

The first of the initial batch of [illegible] million masks was recently presented to Bonn Health Minister Antje Huber during a ceremony in Munich. She said the mask was a major advance in "instant aid" at the scene of an accident.

Fifty per cent of all people involved in accidents suffer from lack of oxygen and one in seven or eight dies of suffocation, says the Erlangen anaesthetist Professor Erich Rügheimer.

He is one of the ADAC team of doctors who developed the lifesaving mask. A similar device has been used in administering anaesthetics.

The mask enables helpers to administer mouth-to-mouth breathing without physical contact with the injured person.

According to Professor Rügheimer, the "distaste barrier" is much wider than generally assumed. Even 12 per cent of medical students have to overcome considerable feelings of nausea before administering mouth-to-mouth resuscitation – primarily due to blood and vomit on the victim's face.

The mask, manufactured for 80 pfennigs, fits into any glove compartment and helps break this barrier.

It is placed over the victim's mouth and nose and the helper breathes through a tube. This must be done immediately because the *brain of the* unconscious person can only survive three minutes without oxygen. About 12 to 15 (twice as many for children) breaths a minute are needed.

Minister Antje Huber also recommended refresher courses in first aid.

Karl Stankiewitz

(Frankfurter Neue Presse, 21 June 1978)



Breaking the distaste barrier to save lives: the kiss-of-life mask in action. (Photo: dpa)

Cancer biggest child killer

About 1,600 children a year contract cancer in West Germany, a cancer research organisation told a 19 June press conference in Berlin. More children die of cancer than of anything other than accidental causes, doctors said.

dpa

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 24 June 1978)

Leukemia still beats best science brains

The causes of leukemia (cancer of the blood) are still unknown, a congress in Wilsede in the Lüneburg Heath, attended by 140 specialists from 14 countries, has been told.

Though medicine is familiar with the course of the disease and its symptoms, the proliferation of white blood cells, haematologists, cell researchers and virologists still disagree on its causes.

It is generally assumed that leukemia in human beings is caused by a number of elements.

In animals, the pathological change in the blood is frequently caused by viruses. Mice, monkeys, chickens, cats and cattle are also known to suffer from the disease.

Incidentally, the disease appears to be spreading among cattle. The first cows suffering from leukemia were found in Scotland recently.

Leukemia in animals is passed on by physical contact or by heredity. Essentially, the disease can be attributed to a degeneration of the cell division mechanism, which prevents the maturing of a diseased cell.

The cell keeps splitting and its proliferation prevents the development of normal cells.

But the causes of the process are unknown. As opposed to leukemia in animals, no leukemia virus has yet been found in humans. Reports of American and Dutch researchers claiming to have isolated leukemia viruses are viewed with scepticism.

There are two main types of leukemia: the acute lymphatic leukemia, found primarily in children and combatted quite seccessfully, and the acute myelogenous leukemia found only in adults. There are chronic varieties of both forms.

American pediatrician Donald Pinkel has evolved a therapy, now accepted world-wide, consisting of a combination of chemotherapy and high doses of radiation with which some 50 per cent of children suffering from the disease can be cured. A cure here means five years without symptoms.

Only ten years ago, children suffering from leukemia invariably died after nine months. Still open is the question why 50 per cent of leukemic children do not respond to treatment.

The congress was told that American scientists have found leukemic cells in human genetic material related to the genetic material of leukemia viruses in apes.

This could mean that leukemia in human beings is also caused by viruses.

dpa

(Bremer Nachrichten, 24 June 1978)

■ SOCIETY

Troubled students put strain on counselling services

Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger

A recent report by the German Students' Association shows that 50,000 students a year, six per cent of the student population, see psychologists and psychotherapists at German universities.

They seek advice:

- Because of learning and concentration problems.
- To find a way out of the ghetto of the mass university and their own isolation.
- So that they can cope with the competitiveness and pressure to perform.
- To get help for depression.
- To get drugs for psychosomatic pains.

Counselling centres in this country like their counterparts elsewhere, are under heavy pressure. Counsellors agree that students have far more psychological problems than the rest of the population.

Take the case of Peter F., studying law at Cologne University up to a few weeks ago. Now he is working as an unskilled labourer "until something better turns up."

Peter F. is one of thousands of university students who want to give up their studies because of problems. He says: "I just couldn't concentrate on my work. At first I was really keen but I soon got frustrated and couldn't get any further."

He spent a year trying to come to terms with the problem. Then he went along to a student counselling centre to seek psychological advice. "After a few intensive talks there I realised what the problem was. My parents paid for my studies, but in return I had to dress and behave the way they wanted me to. I couldn't accept this and this was the real cause of my difficulties in concentrating."

After this became clear, Peter had only one aim: to break the dependency on his parents and start earning money. "I feel a thousand times better now, much freer."

Dr. Ursula Lindig, director of the Hamburg University counselling centre, says: "The first problem is moving away from home. Then the difficult transition from school to university.

Students have to organise their studies themselves, perhaps they have to study a subject they don't like because their marks are not good enough to study the subject of their choice. Then they have to move to a strange town and look around for new friends."

There is also the students' financial dependence on the state or on their parents which means they are in a kind of "prolonged adolescence," a dependence inappropriate to their age.

But this is not all. As soon as the freshman has got over the initial difficulties, there is the fear of examinations. Will I pass? How good are the others? What questions are going to be asked? A thousand difficulties give rise to latent problems and in examinations suddenly become existential problems.

The third critical phase is the end of the course: What happens now? Will I get a job. Have I chosen the right profession? I have to decide for ever. And then my girlfriend wants us to get married ...

This reluctance or fear of making a final decision on professional and private life frequently leads to serious symptoms such as stomach cramps, headaches, lack of concentration. The University is behind this tangle of problems, which sometimes even leads to suicide. Often it is only the catalyst for conflicts related to upbringing and social circumstances bound to break out sooner or later anyway.

In her contribution to the Bonn government's Report on the State of Psychiatry, Ursula Lindig writes that the mass universities with their vast organisation, complex range of courses and the vague job prospects can often bring latent psychological problems to the surface. In private life, the university offers no help whatever. Feelings have no place in the sciences. And there is little discussion of the purpose of studying.

Psychological problems can have more serious consequences for students than for most other sections of the population. University places are expensive and if a student drops out or changes courses after a consultation this can save huge amounts. Apart from this, problems not overcome can then affect others (if, for example, the student becomes a teacher when he graduates).

Counselling centres throughout the country are understaffed and overworked. Burkhard Stoyke of the health department of the German Students' Association says this is because there is not enough money. He cites the example of Cologne, where there is only one psychotherapist and one assistant for 30,000 students. (The international norm is one counsellor per thousand students, a figure reached at some American universities.)

The Land Ministries of Education know about the problem: "The North Rhine-Westphalia Land government believes that psychological problems of students must be taken into account when university planning, structure and course reform are being considered'" This dry statement indicates that the authorities are aware that universities can cause illness and that reforms are needed.

Bonn therapist Unsöld says: "It would be desirable if we could have some influence on university structure but this is a Utopian demand in view of the tremendous pressure of work we are under."

The prospects of better counselling in future seem good. At the majority of German universities, Hamburg and Münster, for instance, "integrated student counselling systems" have been introduced. Here the same counsellors describe the formal aspects of study and help the students overcome psychological problems.

Ursula Lindig explains: "We sort out right from the start why a student has chosen a certain subject. Is it because it is what he really wants to do or is it what his parents want or has he just chosen it because he was good at it at school?"

Once the question of motivation has been dealt with, the cause of a large number of problems is removed. A further help, especially for contact problems, is the communal apartment in the student hall of residence.

Dr Hans Krebs recommends relaxation techniques for those who suffer from anxiety. In general, Dr Krebs explains, psychological problems can be solved more easily when one is aware of one's own intentions and desires.

Udo P. Tschimmel

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 21 June 1978)

Anxiety 'serious problem' for many – Munich study

Frankfurter Neue Presse

A detailed study by the Munich University Institute of Psychology counselling centre shows that anxiety is becoming a serious problem for many people.

"It is certainly reasonable to assume that anxiety is one of the main symptoms of the four to eight million people with psychological problems in this country," the report says.

Within four months, 352 people came to the counselling centre complaining of extreme, chronic states of anxiety. As a rule people only seek such help when they no longer feel able to cope with everyday life. The Munich psychologists emphasise that most people regarded anxiety as a inevitable part of life and something they have to accept. It could be assumed that the number suffering this way and not seeking help was very high.

Sixty-nine per cent of those sick with anxiety were women and 31 per cent were men – an alarming difference. Ages ranged from 4 to 77. The greatest incidence of anxiety symptoms was found in the 30 to 40 age group. The average age for women was 38, for men 39.

One in four men and women complained of anxiety in company (social anxiety). Situation anxieties predominated among women (fear of enclosed spaces, fear of heights, fear of crossing roads with heavy traffic, agoraphobia).

Men complained the most and almost twice as often as women of anxiety states with no obvious cause (existential anxiety, fear of the future, fear of sickness and death and anxiety at certain physical states such as palpitations or the sound of breathing).

"One can speculate that social norms play a part here," the report says. "Women are prepared to admit their anxieties whereas anxiety in men manifests itself in physical reactions." The fear of being alone seemed to be evenly distributed among the sexes.

Patients' personal details showed that some women had been suffering from anxiety for almost 15 years and some men for up to eight years. On average, women had been under treatment by doctors, psychiatrists and psychologists for three years and men for two.

Forty per cent of the men and 22 per cent of the women had even had hospital treatment for their problems. At the time of registering at the centre, 55 per cent of women and 52 per cent of men were taking drugs to allay their anxieties.

These forms of treatment had obviously not uproved successful. Seventy-five of the 115 patients who had further treatment at the centre were therefore given therapeutic training to overcome fear consisting of confrontation with situations which caused fear, discussion of them and relaxation exercises.

Ninety-five per cent of the patients considered themselves cured after this treatment and this was confirmed by two independent experts. After six months the average rate of improvement was 50 per cent. Another 40 per cent decided to join self-help groups, often a useful form of post-therapy but no substitute for therapy itself.

Karl Stankiewicz

(Frankfurter Neue Presse, 22 June 1978)

■ LIVING

Young city slickers opt into challenge of sheep-race

Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger

The life of the 15 young people between 18 and 25 raising sheep on a remote farm near Kempten in the Bavarian Alps is unusual, but so are their backgrounds.

The whole thing began five years ago when Mike, a mechanic, and Winnie, a laboratory technician in a dairy, lost their jobs.

Faces with a bleak future, they decided to opt out of the rat-race and do something new that would hold out more than just competition, money and a career.

They decided on to sheep farming as a way of life that could provide them with security and contentment. They have found both, combating youth unemployment at the same time.

Their farm, Burgstall, is anything but idyllic. It is in one of the windiest corners of Bavaria's Allgäu at an altitude of more than 1,000 metres. The severe and forbidding farmhouse has none of the elements of Alpine gingerbread architecture and the area is extremely cold and rainy.

On a recent afternoon at Burgstall two men carted huge bales of sheep wool down the stairs. The wool is to go to Kempten for spinning.

Now the sheep farmers intend to process their wool themselves because the price of raw wool has fallen so low that it is hardly worth shearing the sheep.

One of 15 farmers has been learning the sheep-shearing trade while five have for the past six months been learning to spin.

Their wool is much in demand and they sell it on market days in towns throughout the country, some of it being mailed COD. When the founders started they had an old, disused farmhouse with an outside baking oven and two sheep — a gift.

Fortunately, they soon aroused the interest of a local savings bank manager, who liked their idea so much that he granted them a DM10,000 credit, personally guaranteed by him.

This starting capital enabled them to buy 200 mountain sheep. The flock now numbers 500 — having multiplied partly biologically and partly through a clever promotion scheme.

The promotion idea came about when the Founding Fathers, trying to find ways of getting a viable herd in the shortest possible time, latched on to the idea of "sheep sponsorship." People interested in the environment were offered mountain lambs at DM130 each which they then placed at the disposal of Burgstall.

Since mid-1977, the farmers have been moving with their flock from region to region, using their sheep as a natural cleaning gang.

Mike, who had done voluntary work in environmental protection, realised that agriculture in the Alps had undergone a structural change, moving from self-sufficiency to market orientation and costing many mountain farmers their livelihood. To work for a market calls for machines and many of the farms were so rugged that machines could not operate. As a result, they were abandoned and the untended mountain slopes began to erode.

This development was accelerated by the planting of pine monocultures which, while profitable, could not provide protective covering. Already 78 of 100 Allgäu trees are pines.

Where formerly cows and sheep had seen to natural rejuvenation, now the stag and deer of owners of hunting preserves roam. And where leasing out shoots to hunters pays 25 times the price of a similar lease to a farmer, farming must give way.

Clearly the time had come for action. Soon the initial Burgstall pair were joined by more and more young people. There was Dick, 20, an office trainee unable to finish his training due to a serious traffic accident. Then came Barnie, a garage mechanic who now looks after the machinery on the Burgstall farm, followed by Waltraud who, having finished high school, decided against university life in favour of farming.

The young men and women at Burgstall are planning a lifetime of farming. They can imagine becoming a huge family — from infant to grandmother. There are no age limits and everyone is welcome, says Mike.

But applicants are severely tested before being accepted — and with the large number of candidates Mike and his friends can afford to choose.

On the recent afternoon, a group of visitors arrived, among them a boy of 16, evidently trying to escape the stress of school life and the "repressive society," as he called it. He is permitted to talk, the Burgstall people interjecting a question now and then. The boy complains that two of his friends who wrote to Burgstall received a rather curt reply.

Says one of the farmers: "We don't want to raise any unwarranted hopes."

The Burgstall farm considers itself a model and the first stage of a "European Cooperative Movement." Some time ago, the farmers established a "Society for the Promotion of Understanding Among Peoples." Says Mike: "When we wander across the mountains there are no frontiers. All we look out for is the dales and rivers. Environment protection is not a task for individual states but for a community of states." The intention is to rent a second farm when the present one proves too small, and there are plenty on the market. Life at Burgstall is spartan. The young people work hard from sunrise to sundown and, because they are still expanding their operation, they have to be extremely thrifty. The budget allows only DM180 a month per person for food and drink.

The shepherds are largely self-sufficient in food. They bake their own bread in the outdoor bakehouse which they rebuilt, raise their own fruit and vegetables and the cow they bought provides them with milk, butter and cheese.

Only once in a while, when visited by neighbours from the village, do they slaughter a sheep. And once in a while, says Mike, "Our parents send us a tuck-box."

They do not want to be seen as a commune or considered hippies. "We are also no great theoreticians," they say. But word has got around that they are hard workers — especially among the neighbouring farmers.

Having been viewed with mistrust initially, they are now fully accepted, not only by the village policeman but even by the Burgomaster himself. He recently inspected the farm in person.

Village officials patiently help them cope with the inevitable red tape, particularly important because the bureaucracy does not have a pigeonhole for this type of operation. "We are still something of a mystery to the bureaucrats," says Mike.

Heinz Welz

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 24 June 1978)

Seeing a future on the land: Winnie, one of the city dwellers who is learning to raise sheep on an Allgäu farm. (Photo: Christoph Morlok)



Not a moment to spare for the rocking chair: Agnes Pauli, 82 likes nothing more than getting out on the water in her dinghy when the weather is keeping lesser sailors safe on land. (Photo: Heinz Hä

Able seawoman Agnes still skipper at 82

Süddeutsche Zeitung

For Germany's oldest active woman sailor the weather is not right unless it is blowing great guns.

"The wind is my engine," says Agnes Pauli, 82, of Düsseldorf, who rejects an auxilliary engine as she rejects a trailer to transport her sailing dinghy.

Agnes Pauli makes a point of getting to races on her own keel — even if it takes her a week. Incidentally, the old lady sails only on the Rhine.

Düsseldorf circumnavigator Wilfried Erdmann, who is once more plying the South Seas aboard his *Kathena*, calls Agnes Pauli a terrific sailing grandma.

The Olympia dinghy she has been sailing since 1938 is much harder to manoeuvre than a comfortable cruising yacht.

He early days were difficult because in the 20s when she began to sail it was considered "mannish" and unladylike for women to enter this male domain.

Before the Württemberg sailing club on Lake Constance permitted her to become a member in 1927 she was a much maligned and mocked member of the Rheingau sailing club.

Today she has lost count of her prizes. "I've got a whole closetfull of trophies, and what isn't there was burnt during the war."

Agnes Pauli insists on being addressed as *Fräulein*. She never liked the idea of having a family because her whole love goes to the wind and water.

Fräulein Pauli, who received her Certificate of Competence for Inland Waterways in 1939, is miffed when she sees rich yachtsmen using their expensive cruising craft simply to have their tea on deck. "They could save themselves a lot of trouble and money by having their tea at home."

rlr.

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 20 June 1978)

■ SPORT

Menotti spells out the lessons of Argentina

DIE ZEIT

"My talented, intelligent players have put paid to the dictatorship of tactics and the terror of systems," Argentinian soccer trainer Cesar Luis Menotti claims.

His squad won the World Cup, beating Holland 3-1 after extra time. Menotti was not talking politics, except inasmuch as football and the eleventh World Cup in Argentina were concerned.

His comment neatly combined praise for the Argentinian team and criticism of fellow-trainers who had tried to transform the showcase of soccer into a demonstration of applied tactics.

Fifa, the international federation, is inclined to agree, having commissioned an interim report from a panel of experts including Rinus Michels, who trained the losing Dutch finalists in 1974.

The report indicates, a Fifa spokesman says, that Helmut Schön and his squad, by resorting to defensive tactics in their bid to retain the World Cup, damaged the game's reputation.

Views voiced during World Cup month ranged from perplexity and resignation to a call for regeneration of the game. If nothing else, this shows that both pundits and fans had specific hopes of the soccer spectacle Argentina was to provide.

When good teams with outstanding reputations meet in the playing enclosure outstanding games of soccer must surely result, it was widely felt.

The outcome could hardly have been more different. The underdogs Tunisia, Austria and Peru, teams with nothing to lose, were the ones to provide soccer with a sparkle.

They certainly provide an object lesson in the profit motive as one of the three key features of this year's World Cup, the other two being prestige and profile.

It would be wrong to classify the Tunisians, Austrians and Peruvians as amateurs. But they stood to earn a mere DM10,000 to DM20,000, whereas members of the German, Brazilian and Italian squads had been promised DM60,000, DM80,000 and DM100,000 respectively if they won the World Cup.

Tunisian trainer Mejid Chetdi proudly claims that his players earn DM2,000 a month at most from football. Their German counterparts would no more than smile wanly at the idea.

Yet the verve and enthusiasm shown by the Tunisian team amply testified to the desire to deliver a sterling performance, not merely in return for hard cash but chiefly for love of the game and determination to win.

Peru put paid to Scotland's hopes, beating the favourites 3-1. Tunisia sprung an unpleasant surprise on Mexico, winning by the same margin. Austria made sure title defenders Germany were well and truly eliminated, trouncing Helmut Schön's squad 3-2.

In all three games the white heat of ambition triumphed over a total lack of imagination, subtle soccer ousted atrophied routine and stand-up-and-fight enthusiasm defeated frenzied effort.

Rainer Bonhof set a good example on his return to Germany by telling fans that he realised he had disappointed them in Argentina and was prepared to start again from scratch.

Fear of forfeiting the big money and the fans' favour, on which they rely for a living, seems to have transformed the soccer stars from national heroes with pretensions to being level-headed businessmen to simple footballers laden with complexes like everyone else.

Helmut Schön and his squad, the artists of Ascochinga, their Argentinian base prior to their ignominious exit from the World Cup, did not seem to know what was hitting them.

Their defenders may argue that a win in the game against Holland, in which the German team was still 2-1 ahead with six minutes to go, would have taken this country to the final.

But it would clearly not have done so. After all, the team went on to lose to Austria, a defeat for which no excuses or explanations are forthcoming.

What clearer indication could there be that the German team were thinking mainly in terms of tactics, responding to situations as they arose rather than improvising or running a risk?

No attempt was undertaken to field a solid phalanx of five Cologne players or to dispense more readily with the services of players such as Rainer Bonhof or Klaus Fischer whose form was not up to the standards required.

Brazilian trainer Claudio Coutinho chose not to select old hand Roberto Rivelino (or to field him for only part of a game) because Rivelino was not in form.

Coutinho preferred younger, faster players with more pep, arguing that hard work counts for more than artistry in soccer. The prestige and profit requirements of an individual star would merely have harmed the team as a whole.

Cesar Menotti likewise expected his squad to knuckle under to the requirements of team discipline. Then, and then only, did he allow them to develop their individual South American skills to the full.

Mario Kempes, the outstanding forward in this year's World Cup competition and the man who scored twice in the World Cup final, was first and foremost a midfield workers.

His job was to stay on the move and make sure that he and his team-mates had room to move in. Only occasionally, as the game progressed, did others take over marking for him, allowing Kempes to go it alone.

Larossa was substituted in midfield in the final with the express purpose of relieving the burden on Kempes. Such were the tactics of a successful trainer who realised that the individual counted for little, the team for everything.

This was doubtless due in part to the lack of really outstanding players. Jackie Charlton, the former England cap who is now himself a club trainer, said he would be going home with an empty book.

In other words, Charlton had seen noone he need bother making a note of. Pelé too lamented that players had lacked courage and no risks had been run in the World Cup fixtures.

Thus Argentina testified to only part of the good soccer that might be thumbnailed as a combination of technique, tempo and tactics.

Instead of setting out to win, teams in most encounters seemed content not to lose. As a result little was seen of the forwards in many games.

Italy, for instance, was successful as long as the team played with three fulltime strikers, aided by attacking midfield players and backs for as long as their stamina lasted.

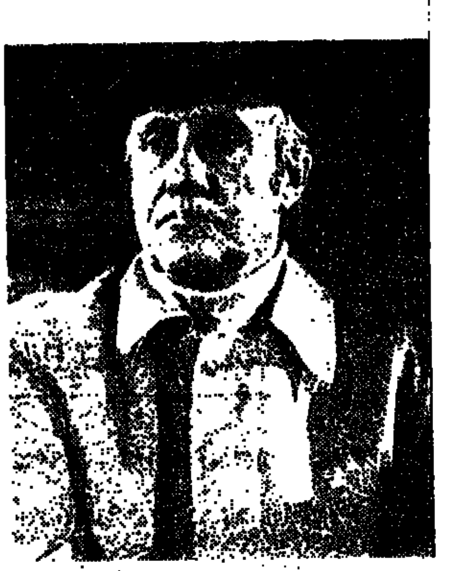
But the Italian team came to a sticky end once this mixture was replaced by defensive play only. The 1-0 lead against Holland and Brazil proved insufficient.

The Argentinian team also went on to the attack with players whose legwork, readiness to give of their best, stamina and technique eventually wore out all the others.

Even the Dutch succumbed to this combination in the World Cup final. The Argentinian players moved at such relentless speed that they left their opponents scant time for a breather.

Their opposite numbers were worn out by continual duels and in non-stop defence, warding off Argentinian attacks. Argentina's football was not, perhaps, blessed by a stroke of genius, but the team worked hard and played attractive soccer.

(Cartoon: Peter Leger/Süddeutsche Zeitung)



Helmut Schön: handing the grey mice over to a new man (Photo: Horstmüller)

The Brazilians, in contrast, again banked on technique and playing for time. They slowed down the play, relying on first-rate defensive work.

Their opponents continually had to fight for possession and saw less of the ball, which eventually wears out most opposition. Brazil were undefeated and came third in Argentina — an undeniable achievement.

But they too lacked the star who could have transformed technically perfect but monotonous play into brilliant soccer. In their 3-1 win over Poland there were signs of what was needed, but that was all.

So Jupp Derwall, Helmut Schön's successor, was only partly right in concluding that "we must, at both club and international level, pay greater attention to technique."

He went on to talk in terms of a "team of grey mice" in Argentina, which was possibly more to the point.

What Derwall meant was players who are perfect in parts, men who can aim at the corner of the net like Rainer Bonhof, run with the speed of a Karl-Heinz Rummenigge or put in the legwork and endurance of a Herbert Zimmermann.

But when the chips are down and the occasion demands, they are unable to put these individual skills to best use under extreme physical and mental strain.

Jupp Derwall's task will be to encourage his squad to do just that. Soccer will, after all, go on, as Helmut Schön was the first to point out on the team's return.

Schön's main problem was that there is no substitute for success. A society geared to success and nothing less, especially in top-level commercialised sport, expects total success and will accept nothing less.

Jupp Derwall has the inestimable advantage of being able to start virtually from scratch, In future he should also be able to use players under contract to foreign clubs when the need arises.

The conclusions to be drawn from the 1978 World Cup are fairly straightforward. As long as tactics prevail over freedom of tempo, technique and the individual player's powers of improvisation soccer is sure to stagnate.

This is a fact that cannot be altered by mere organisational changes such as 20 or 24 competitors instead of 16 or a knockout system rather than group competitions.

Argentina won at home just as Germany did in 1974 and England in 1966. Home ground is an undoubted stimulus. Soccer's secular songsters in the stands and on the terraces demonstrated their power in Buenos Aires once again.

Jürgen Werner

(Die Zeit, 30 June 1978)